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N A O K I S A K A I

Translation and

Subjectivity

On "Japan" and

Cultural Nationalism

Foreword by Meaghan Morris



PUBLIC WORLDS, VOLUME 3

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For Gail

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soon type"), we cannot but admit that his *Ethics* justifies cruelty toward those in diaspora and without their own state protection—refugees, immigrants, foreign laborers, and so on in our present-day world—a cruelty that is the reverse side of the fear of those who would approach "us" and create social relations with "us" in disregard for national borders and identities. Since Watsuji's national narcissism neglected the possibilities of making social relations beyond the national community and refused to keep that community exposed to the outside, it eventually ended up endorsing colonial and racist power relationships between the inside and the outside of the national community, despite his declared hostility to imperialism and racism. Thus, some of his works seem to teach us a great deal about a mechanism that allows an alliance to be created between imperialism and a fascistic social formation through the self-enclosed corporatist desire for "homosociality."

5

Modernity and Its Critique:

The Problem of Universalism and Particularism¹

Even though I will predictably reach the conclusion that the postmodern, an other of the modern, cannot be identified in terms of our "modern" discourse, it should not be utterly pointless to question what constitutes the separation of the modern and the postmodern—that is, what underlies the possibility of our talking about the modern at all. Similarly, it is essential to deal with another other of the modern, the premodern, with reference to which modernity has also been defined in a great many instances. This series—premodern-modern-postmodern—may suggest an order of chronology. However, it must be remembered that this order has never been dissociated from the geopolitical configuration of the world. As is well known by now, this basically nineteenth-century historical scheme provides a perspective through which to comprehend the location of nations, cultures, traditions, and races in a systematic manner. Although the last term emerged fairly recently, the historico-geopolitical pairing of the premodern and the modern has been one of the major organizing apparatuses of academic discourse. The emergence of the third enigmatic term, the postmodern, possibly testifies not so much to a transition from one period to another as to the shift or transformation of our discourse as a result of which the supposed indisputability of the historico-geopolitical pairing (premodern and modern) has become increasingly problematic. Of course,

it is not the first time the validity of this pairing has been challenged. Yet, surprisingly enough, it has managed to survive many challenges, and it would be extremely optimistic to believe it has finally been proven to be ineffectual.

Either as a set of socioeconomic conditions or as an adherence of a society to selected values, the term "modernity" can never be understood without reference to this pairing of the premodern and the modern. Historically, modernity has primarily been opposed to its historical precedent; geopolitically, it has been contrasted to the nonmodern, or, more specifically, to the non-West. Thus the pairing has served as a discursive scheme according to which a historical predicate is translated into a geopolitical one and vice versa. A subject is posited through the attribution of these predicates, and thanks to the function of this discursive apparatus, two kinds of areas are diacritically discerned: the modern West and the premodern non-West. As a matter of course, this does not mean either that the West was never at premodern stages or that the non-West can never be modernized; it simply excludes the possibility of a simultaneous coexistence of the premodern West and the modern non-West.

Already a cursory examination of this sort about modernity amply suggests a certain polarity or warp among the possible ways to conceive of the world historically and geopolitically. As many have pointed out, there is no inherent reason why the West/non-West opposition should determine the geographic perspective of modernity, except for the fact that it definitely serves to establish the putative unity of the West, a nebulous but commanding positivity whose existence we have tended to take for granted for such a long time. It goes without saying that the West has expanded and shifted arbitrarily for the last two centuries. It is a name for a subject that gathers itself in discourse but is also an object constituted discursively; it is, evidently, a name always associating itself with those regions, communities, and peoples that appear politically or economically superior to other regions, communities, and peoples. Basically, it is just like the name "Japan," which reputedly designates a geographic area, a tradition, a national identity, a culture, an ethnos, a market, and so on, yet, unlike all the other names associated with geographic particularities, it also implies the refusal of its self-delimitation; it claims that it is capable of sustaining, if not actually transcending, an impulse to transcend all the particularizations. Which is to say that the West is never content with what it is recognized as by others; it is always urged to approach others in order to ceaselessly transform its self-image; it continually seeks itself in the midst of interaction with the Other; it would never be satisfied with being recog-

nized, but would wish to recognize others; it would rather be a supplier of recognition than a receiver thereof. In short, the West must represent the moment of the universal under which particulars are subsumed. Indeed, the West is particular in itself, but it also constitutes the universal point of reference in relation to which others recognize themselves as particularities. In this regard, the West thinks itself to be ubiquitous.

This account of the putative unity called the West is nothing new, yet this is exactly the way in which Jürgen Habermas, for instance, still argues about Occidental rationalism. He "implicitly connect[s] a claim to *universality* with our *Occidental understanding of the world*."² In order to specify the significance of this claim, he relies on the historical-geopolitical pairing of the premodern and the modern, thereby highlighting a comparison with the mythical understanding of the world. Within the cultural traditions acceptable to us—that is, within the cultural traditions anthropologists have reconstructed for us—myths of archaic societies

present the sharpest contrast to the understanding of the world dominant in modern societies. Mythical worldviews are far from making possible rational orientations of action in our sense. With respect to the conditions for a rational conduct of life in this sense, they present an antithesis to the modern understanding of the world. Thus the heretofore unthematized presuppositions of modern thought should become visible in the mirror of mythical thinking.³

Habermas takes for granted a parallel correspondence among the binary oppositions premodern/modern, non-West/West, mythical/rational. Moreover, for him the very unity of the West is a given; it is an almost tactile reality. What is most surprising is that while admitting the need for the non-West as a mirror by which the West becomes visible, Habermas obviously does not ask if the mirror may be extremely obscure. Whether or not the image facilitated by ethnographers and anthropologists is the true representation of what is actually there is not at issue. What is worth noting is that he deals with non-Western cultures and traditions as though they were clearly shaped and as though they could be treated exhaustively as objects. Even when he tackles the problem concerning the incommensurability of other cultures, the whole issue of unintelligibility is reduced to the intelligibility of the problem of incommensurability. For Habermas, it signifies no more than that of cultural relativism, a pseudoproblem in itself.

Habermas argues with epistemological confidence in order to reinstall epistemological confidence in us and make us trust in universalism again.⁴ Given the most persuasive and possibly most rigorous determination avail-

able today of the term "ethnocentricity," one might say he is simply ethnocentric. But if the intrusion of the term "postmodern" bears witness to the inquietude surrounding our identity, if this putative unity of the West, the us, from which and with whom Habermas wishes to speak is being dissolved, what does the fact that his epistemological confidence is not shaken imply? If the possibility of a certain enunciative position, the us, the Occidental us, with which his theory of communicative action is so closely interwoven, is in fact threatened, would one be justified to say his epistemological confidence indicates something else? Are we then allowed to say it points to an inquietude about us that has been repressed?

From this perspective, it is understandable that the discursive object called Japan has presented a heterogeneous instance that could not be easily integrated into the global configuration organized according to the pairing of the modern and premodern. It has been repeatedly deplored or extolled that Japan alone of the non-Western cultures was able to adopt rapidly what it needed from Western nations in order to transform itself into a modern industrial society. Hence, a sizable amount of intellectual labor has been invested in order to render this peculiar object innocuous in the discursive formation. In the United States, the consequences of this labor have usually been collected under the name "modernization theory." In addition to overtly strategic requirements of the state, there was a certain implicit but no less urgent demand to which the production of social-scientific and humanistic argument was submitted. Following Max Weber, who also saw clearly the mission of discursively ascertaining the putative unity of the West and who executed that mission most skillfully, some modernization theorists pursued the mission of ascertaining the unity of America as the central and perhaps commanding part of the West.

What modernization theory has accomplished by introducing the opposition of universalism and particularism into the study of other cultures is, first, to reproduce the same kind of discursive formation within which the unity of the West is constituted—but, this time, with the center explicitly in the United States; second, it has generated a new kind of historical narrative that preserves the dictates of nineteenth-century historicism but rejects its overt reliance on the notion of national history. Here, I hasten to add that this does not mean that the new historical narrative was less nationalistic or in an antagonistic relation with nationalism. This version of universalism is, like some other universalisms, decidedly nationalistic. Yet, in this new narrative, nationalism had to be articulated differently. On the one hand, modernization theorists certainly inherited the European

legacy of a historical time that coincides with the transition, gradual or rapid, from particularity to universality, from abstract universality to concrete universality, and ultimately coincides with the process of increasing rationalization, of reason realizing itself. On the other hand, they saw universalistic elements as being dispersed, instead of stressing the dynamics of conflict between the self and the other, the attempt was made to show that any society is potentially capable of rationalizing itself. But it is also explicit that, in rationalizing itself, that society becomes similar to the United States. Or, to put it slightly differently, progress always means Americanization. In this respect, modernization theorists expressed the vision, most successfully implanted in the mass consciousness of postwar Japan, that modernization was implicitly equated with Americanization. Whereas, prior to this, modernization had been more or less equated with Europeanization, modernization theory at large worked in the service of shifting the center from Western Europe to the United States.

Obviously, it is utterly beside the point to ask which vision of modernization is more authentic. What this reading hints at is that, although the modernization process may be envisioned as a move toward the concretization of values at some abstract level, it is always imagined as a concrete transfer from one point to another on a world map.

Thus, universality and the concept of modernity were even more closely woven together with American nationalism than before. But because of this double structure, universalism often appears free of the well-recognized defects of nationalism. Of course, the claim to universality frequently serves to promote the demands of nationalism. Because of the double structure, an incessant oscillation is generated between universalism and particularism; possibly a certain provincialism and a certain aspiration toward universalism are two sides of the same coin; particularism and universalism do not form an antimony but mutually reinforce each other. As a matter of fact, particularism has never been a truly disturbing enemy of universalism or vice versa. Precisely because both are closed off to the singular, who can never be transformed into the subject or what infinitely transcends the universal, neither universalism nor particularism is able to come across the other; otherness is always reduced to the Other, and thus repressed, excluded, and eliminated in them both. And, after all, what we normally call universalism is a particularism thinking itself as universalism; it is doubtful whether universalism could ever exist otherwise.

Certain conditions have to be met, however, for this universalism to be possible. The center of the West being assumed to represent the most densely universalistic social formation, it ought to be ahead of less univer-

salistic and more particularistic societies in the historical time of rationalization; it must be the most *advanced* particularity, since universality is equated to the ability to change and rationalize its social institutions. Embedded in this format is an equation according to which one can infer, from the relative degree of economic rationality, the society's investment in universalism. In other words, unless a society performs well in such a sphere as the economy, it would not be able to claim it adheres to universalism. Hence, when the society is perceived to be ahead of other societies, this universalism effectively and powerfully legitimizes that society's dominion over others. But if its economic and political superiority to the others in rationalization is not perceived to be certain, it rapidly loses its effectuality and persuasiveness. By the weight of its commitment to universalism, the society's self-esteem would eventually be put in jeopardy. Universalism would then appear to be the burden under whose pressure the image of the society as a totality would be crushed.

The term "postmodern" obliquely attests to this sort of internal contradiction that modern universalism has come to realize. *The Fracture of Meaning* by David Pollack is one of the best instances in which to observe what would happen when a naive universalism is confronted with such recognition. It reacts to the perceived change of environment by reinforcing the already existing rules of discourse according to which universalism has been naturalized. What is significant here, however, is that, whereas those rules were previously implicit, assumed, and accepted silently, they have now to be stated and loudly announced. It is in this point that the importance of Pollack's work lies; furthermore, his investigation of the Japanese aesthetic constitutes a deliberate attempt to conserve the kind of framework embedded in the accumulated knowledge on the non-West, particularly in the Far East. What makes his work even more interesting is his gesture of respecting and taking seriously the kind of theoretical critique, sometimes called poststructuralism in academic journalism, that has been most effective in disclosing a specific, Eurocentric, and humanistic power relation in the production of knowledge. Pollack's dauntless determination to eliminate and neutralize the critical impulse of "poststructuralism" is betrayed at almost every point where the authority of such names as Jacques Derrida and Roland Barthes is appealed to. Yet one must be sensitive to ways in which his argument collapses, since these reveal much more about the persistence of that obsolete but arrogant discursive formation called "modernity" than about mere technical mistakes.

In demonstrating a uniquely Japanese dialectic called *wakan*, "Japanese/

Chinese," by means of which the subjective identity of Japan has been installed, Pollack manipulates the master metaphor, an old trope repeatedly used in Western studies of the Far East for nearly a century, of "a frog from the bottom of its well, who would define its world almost exclusively in terms of its walls."⁵ Until the mid-nineteenth century, China was Japan's walls in opposition to which Japan's existence was defined. The United States, Pollack adds, has recently taken over that role. Just as Japan previously defined itself as China's other, so today it defines itself as America's other. In both cases, Japan is self-parasitic in one sense and relational in another. Putting aside the problem of whether or not every possible form of subjective identity is parasitic and relational, he proceeds to display many "scientific facts" that, without exception, testify to a distinctive gap between the Chinese and Japanese languages. And he begins more detailed descriptions of a uniquely Japanese culture "with the simple and very modern-sounding premise that culture and language reflect and are informed by the same structures."⁶ Yet, based on this premise, or on one of the implications of this premise, that both culture and language must be able to be isolated as unitary systems in order for these unities to "reflect and to be informed by the same structures," the gap between China and Japan at the level or representation is inscribed upon and merged with the difference between the two at the level of the real.

In linguistics, some systematic unity of regularities has to be posited as a necessary presupposition in order to analyze and organize so-called empirical information. What constitutes the possibility of linguistics as a systematic and formal corpus of knowledge is this positing of language unity, which should never be confused with the actual substance of a language. But the systematic unity of a language does not exist in various linguistic activities as "the spine exists in the body of the mammal."⁷ Hence, it is misleading to say that linguistics discovers and identifies the unity of a particular local or national language after the examination of data. On the contrary, the positing of such a particular language unity is the necessary condition for the possibility of language research. The nature of language unities such as Japanese or Chinese is basically discursive.

This is to say that a language unity cannot be represented as a circumscribed space or closure. The metaphor of "a frog in the well" is not necessarily irrelevant; it is rather accurate and extremely persuasive in the context of contemporary Japan, where the outside world seems to be a mere image projected on the walls erected by national mass media. However, if this metaphor is linked to a typical epistemological cliché of cultural solipsism, all these unities would be reified, and this is what happens with Pol-

lack. In part this results from his inability to maintain the difference between a category of analysis and an object of analysis. But, more important, this seems to be a consequence of the general lack of theoretical critique about modern discourse.

For instance, the three unities of Japanese language, Japanese culture, and the Japanese nation are repeatedly used almost interchangeably. As if obediently following the models of Japanese historiography (*kōkoku shikan*) or more recent discourse on Japanese uniqueness (*nihonjin-ron*), Pollack projects the stereotypical image of contemporary Japan into its middle ages and antiquity. In order to stress how different the Japanese are from the Chinese, and to demonstrate the dialectic interaction of the two nations, he frequently resorts to the kind of circular argument in which Japanese culture is identified by referring to the identity of Japanese language; Japanese is then identified by referring to the national identity of the people; and, finally, the Japanese people are identified by their cultural and linguistic heritage. He is not aware that this series of tautologies is a feature of a historically specific discursive formation. What Pollack does not see is that there is no logical ground on which the three categories correspond to each other in their referents. As I argued elsewhere, it is only in recent history that the putative unity of Japanese culture was established.⁸ An object of discourse called culture belongs to recent times. For Pollack, these three unities are transhistorical universals: *The Fracture of Meaning* most specifically endorses cultural essentialism. His argument amounts to the task of determining Japan as a particularity, whose sense of identity is always dependent on the other. Needless to say, this other is a universal one in contrast to which Japanese particularism is rendered even more conspicuous. By extension, this determination of Japan implies that Japan has been from the outset a "natural" community, has never constituted itself as a "modern" nation.

Pollack argues that, despite the evident linguistic heterogeneity between China and Japan, the Japanese adapted Chinese writing, which generated an endless anxiety over their own identity:

It would no more have occurred to the Chinese, for example, than it would to us to find a "problem" in the adequacy of their own script to represent their thoughts. And yet our investigation begins precisely with the problem of the adoption of the Chinese script in Japan's "first" text, a problem that will become paradigmatic for all that follows.⁹

Japanese uniqueness, he asserts, is best manifested in the fact that Japan had to borrow a foreign script. Plainly, the title of his book, *The Fracture of*

Meaning, comes from this understanding. But the reader will be caught by surprise when reading the following: "Clearly, the notion of a 'fracture' of the semiotic field of culture is not unique to Japan; nor is modern semiotics, after all, a subject particularly associated with Japan."¹⁰ Evidently, Pollack did not mean to say, "It would no more have occurred to the Chinese, for example, than it would to us to find a 'problem' in the adequacy of their own script to represent their thoughts." Of course, he did not mean it, for, after all, the meaning is fractured not solely for the Japanese, but for us all. But does not the pretense of not admitting that the script is not adequate to thought lead to the formation of an ethnocentric closure? Does not the recognition of the meaning's fracture purport that, because not only writing but also speech is exterior and inadequate to thought, the script is always foreign and that it, therefore, pierces the imagined closure of ethnic, cultural, and language unity? Does not Derrida say that, when one speaks or writes, one is always external to one's putative identities?

In order to criticize Japanese particularism and possibly what Pollack thought of as Japanese cultural essentialism, he had to construct an image of Japan that would never adopt and include others. This is to say that he first had to create an object he could later bash. But, in this process, he mistakenly defined this peculiar object in terms of his own cultural essentialism. As a result, cultural essentialism has been accepted as the basic vocabulary belonging to the subject who studies rather than as an attribute of the object studied.

This kind of inversion repeatedly occurs in Pollack's book. When the overall methodological construction of this work is examined, one cannot help but notice another inversion. In the Introduction, Pollack states: "I am concerned with the Japanese interpretations of what they saw as essentially "Chinese," rather than our own interpretations or those of the Chinese themselves."¹¹ In accordance with the metaphor of "a frog in the well," these three fields, or three wells, form a hermeneutic horizon, as Pollack asserts the hermeneutic nature of his study. However, he says in the conclusion: "I am concerned here with a dialectical process . . . so that this study becomes more than anything else a hermeneutics of Japanese culture, a study of the ways in which the Japanese interpretation of themselves and their culture evolved over time."¹² Here the Japanese field is chosen, and he says he is concerned only with the dialectic of the Chinese and the Japanese seen from the viewpoint of the Japanese, so "neither China nor even the idea of China was necessarily involved in its operation."¹³ He deals with China only insofar as it is represented by the Japanese.

What he is unable to comprehend is the fact, without reference to

which the metaphor of the frog in the well would not work, that the frog can never see its own well on the walls. For the frog, the totality of the well can never be visible. Therefore, it would never know that it is confined to a tiny space; it is not aware that what it believes to be the entire universe is merely a small well. In order to know that its universe is merely a well, the image of the well must be projected on the walls. Thus, for the frog (Japanese) the totality of the well (Japan) is basically invisible and has to be recognized only as a representation projected on the walls. If China is dealt with only as a representation, Japan should be dealt with in exactly the same fashion. Furthermore, if the Japanese do not have some representation of Japan and their confinement or subjection to it, they could not even recognize that they are Japanese; they would not be able to identify themselves with Japan. As China is simply imaginary for the Japanese, so Japan is also imaginary for them. If Pollack wishes to talk about the synthesis of China and the Japanese culture, he must first talk about the synthesis of Japan in the Japanese culture. There should be as much dialectic between the Japanese and Japan as between the Japanese and China. Of course, his cultural essentialism is totally blind to the problem of subjectivity.

One of the ironic implications of this metaphor is that no one can confidently claim to be free from the fate of the frog. The frog believes that there is no other and different world outside its small world; so its knowledge of its small world is supposed to be universally valid everywhere. But how can the world of those who laugh at the frog be guaranteed not to be another well? The haughty and self-confident smile on their faces will freeze as soon as this question is posed. After all, is the Japan Pollack describes any different from the China the Japanese imagined on the walls of their well?

In a sense, *The Fracture of Meaning* is haunted by a sense of insecurity that seemingly stems from an implicit knowledge that somebody might ask this question anytime. What has been undertaken to repress this sense of insecurity is the setting up of an enunciative position from which the author speaks in universal terms—a ubiquitous and transcendent stance from which he views things. It is arranged to appear natural that Pollack's words are automatically registered as metalanguage. His language posits the *us* with whom he wished to speak, and his *we*, the speaking subject of this metalanguage, coincides with the West, and the United States in particular. Thus, once more, the West assumes its universality and ubiquity in the midst of its particularity. Pollack's argument presupposes that the opposition of theory (universal) and the object of theory (particular) corresponds to that of the West and Japan.

A privileged object of discourse called Japan is thus constituted in order to show *us* the supposedly concrete instance of particularism, in contrast to which *our* universalism is ascertained. Japan is defined as a specific and unitary particularity in universal terms: Japan's uniqueness and identity are provided insofar as Japan stands out as a particular object in the field of the West. Only when it is integrated into Western universalism does it gain its own identity as a particularity. In other words, Japan becomes endowed with and aware of its own "self" only when it is recognized by the West. It is no accident that the discourse on Japanese uniqueness (*nihonjin-ron*) mentions innumerable cases of Japan's difference from the West, thereby defining Japan's identity in terms of deviations from the West. Its insistence on Japan's peculiarity and difference from the West embodies a nagging urge to see the self from the viewpoint of the other. But this is nothing but the positing of Japan's identity in Western terms, which in return establishes the centrality of the West as the universal point of reference. This is why, despite the gestures of criticizing Japanese exclusivism and ethnocentricity, Pollack in fact eagerly embraces and endorses the Japanese particularism and racism so evident in *nihonjin-ron*. As a matter of fact, his entire argument would collapse without this open acceptance of particularism.

Contrary to what has been advertised by both sides, universalism and particularism reinforce and supplement each other; they are never in real conflict; they need each other and have to seek to form a symmetrical, mutually supporting relationship by every means in order to avoid a dialogic encounter that would necessarily jeopardize their reputedly secure and harmonized monologic worlds. Universalism and particularism endorse each other's defect in order to conceal their own; they are intimately tied to each other in their complicity. In this respect, a particularism such as nationalism can never be a serious critique of universalism, for it is an accomplice thereof.

Still, the relationship between the West and the non-West seems to follow the old and familiar formula of master/slave. During the 1930s, when "the times after the modern" (*gendai*), somewhat similar to our postmodernity, were extensively examined, one of the issues that some Japanese intellectuals problematized was the West and the non-West relationship itself. In offering a diagnosis of the times, many, including the young philosophers of the Kyoto school such as Kôyama Iwao and Kôsaka Masaaki, singled out as the most significant index the rapport between the Western (European) and the non-Western (non-European) worlds. A fundamental change,

they observed, had taken place in the world since the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries. Until the late nineteenth century, history seemed to have moved linearly toward the further unification of the world. The entire globe was entirely organized according to the singular framework that ultimately would allow for only one center. History appeared to be an unending process of unification and centralization, with Europe at the center. Hence, it was understandable and partially inevitable to conceive of history simply as the process of Westernization (Europeanization). In this historical scheme, the entire world was viewed from the top, and was thought of as being Western in the sense that the rest of the world was being taken to be that which was doomed to be Westernized. Essentially, as is best represented by Hegelian historicism, "the history of the world was European history."¹⁴

However, toward the late nineteenth century, Kôyama claims, the non-Western world began to move toward its independence and to form a world of its own. As a consequence of this transformation, what had hitherto been taken for the entire world was revealed to be a merely modern (*kindai*) world, a world among many worlds. This possibility for historical cognition and praxis, informed by the fundamental historical transformation of the world, was then called "World History." In this "World History," it was assumed that historical changes simply could not be comprehended without reference to the already established spatial categories: climate, geography, race, nation, culture, and so on. Only within the framework set up by those categories was it possible to understand historical developments and make sense out of various changes that were to be incorporated into a larger unit of narrative. What this simple but undeniable recognition pointed to was that history was not only temporal or chronological but also spatial and relational. The condition for the possibility of conceiving of history as a linear and evolutionary series of incidents lay in its not as yet thematized relation to other histories, other *co-existing* temporalities. Whereas monistic history (*ichigenteki rekishi*) did not know its implicit reliance on other histories and thought itself autonomous and total, "world" history conceived of itself as the spatial relations of histories. In world history, therefore, one could not think of history exclusively in those terms that referred back only to that same history: monistic history could not deal with the world as it was apprehended in world history since the world is primarily a sphere of heterogeneity and others. To what extent Kôyama's world history was capable of facing heterogeneity and others, and whether or not world history would ever be able to be exposed to them in their heterogeneity and otherness, will be examined later.

But I should note that this notion of otherness and heterogeneity was always defined in terms of differences among or between nations, cultures, and histories, as if there had been no differences and heterogeneity within one nation, culture, and history. For Kôyama, heterogeneity and otherness were at most moments of *international* differences.

An oblivion of spatial predicates, which reveals itself as the truth of monistic history at the emergence of world history, comes from certain historical conditions. Unless the historical and cultural world is seriously challenged and influenced by another, it will never reach an awareness that its own world can never be directly equated with the world at large, and would continue to fantasize about itself as being the representative and representation of totality. Eurocentric history is one of the most typical cases of this: for it, the world does not exist. But Kôyama also adds Japanese national history to the list. Japanese national history is another example of monistic history in which, in spite of the fact that Japan has been challenged and influenced by other histories and cultures, it has yet to arrive at the knowledge that history resides in those interactions with others, because of its island situation (*shimaguni-teki jôken*).

What Kôyama brought into awareness is the fact that the very identity of a history is constituted by its interdependence with other histories, things other than itself. Precisely because monistic history does not recognize the conditions for the possibility of its own identity, it naively expands specific values indefinitely and continues to insist on the universal validity of those values: it misunderstands and misconstrues the moment according to which the necessity to claim its universality and the insistence on its identity are simultaneously inaugurated. Thus the moment of otherness is deliberately transformed in order to maintain its putative centrality as the initiator of the universal and the commensurability of universal and particular values. This no doubt amounts to the annihilation of the Other in its otherness. Probably the mission that monistic history believes itself to take charge of is best summarized in the following statement: "They are just like us." Of course, it has to be remembered, this statement is definitely distinct from another statement—"We are just like them"—in which the centrality of *us* is not ensured; that is, the inferiority in the power of *us* is instituted instead of the superiority, but these form a *supplementary* pair.

Monistic history has worked in the service of a certain historically specific domination, a form of domination that has not ceased to be turbulent in its effect even today. However, Kôyama saw and tried to seize a turning point in the development of monistic history. He insisted that another his-

tory, world history, which recognizes other histories, was about to emerge, and this emergence should mark a fundamental change in the relationship between the subject of history and its others; it should indicate that the monistic history in which others were refused their own recognition was no longer possible. In this new history, the plurality of histories and the interaction among them would be the principle. Hence, spatial terms of necessity would be incorporated into a history that would have to be construed as a synthesis of time and space, and internationalized.

What Kôyama advocated may sound like a genuinely pluralistic history as opposed to a linear singular one, and, if one were to believe all that has been said, this transition from monistic history to world history should mark a radical historical change leading to a different power arrangement in which cultural, national, and historical particularities are fully expressed. All the cultural worlds would then be mediated not by what Kôsaka Masaaki called the "ontological universals" (*yû-teki fuben*) but by the *mu* universals (*mu-teki fuben*).¹⁵ And if this should be the case, one would then envisage the beyond of modern times, the other side of the historical break that would allow one to identify the limits of the modern discourse—in short, a genuine postmodernity.

In this context, it is noteworthy that, for Kôyama as well as Kôsaka, the unity of the subject of history, of pluralistic history, is unequivocally equated with that of the nation-state. Yet they stress that the nation-state does not immediately correspond to a race (*jinsbu*) or folk (*minzoku*). The state for them is a being-for-itself that is opposed to other states, and, in this regard, it exists in the "world." The state, therefore, is not likened to other "entities" such as race, nation, clan, or family precisely because it has to be mediated by its relationships with other states and consequently be self-reflective—that is, a subject. On the other hand, the nation designates a community rooted in nature, a community where people are born and die. The bondage that keeps its members together is that of blood, procreation, and land, and is natural in the sense that the tie between mother and child is natural.

Kôyama issues a warning disclaimer here: the nation as a natural community can never be the subject of history because it is not mediated by universals. The natural community (Kôsaka refers to it as "substratum" [*kitai*]) is not a subject in itself, for it has yet to be rationalized. The natural community must be represented by the state; only through the state, the natural community is identified as the *nation for itself*. And only through this representation to itself does the nation become historical and generate its

own culture, a historical world of its own. At this stage, a nation forms a history or historical world of its own with the state as its subject.

While rejecting Hegelian philosophy as an extension of monistic history, Kôyama rigorously follows Hegelian construction. Accepting all the "modern" premises, Kôyama attempts to change merely their historical view. By introducing pluralistic world history and thereby claiming to go beyond modernity (*kindai*), he endorses almost everything the Japanese state has acquired under the name of modernization. The critique of the West and of the modern expressed in his critique of monistic history seems to disclose the fact that the whole rhetoric of antimodernity is in fact a cover for the unprincipled endorsement of anything modern when Kôsaka and Kôyama deal with the issues on which the critique of the West is most urgent—the issues related to the Sino-Japanese relations during the 1930s and early 1940s.

In a roundtable talk held in November 1941, Kôsaka, Kôyama, and others refer to the relationship between historical development and the morality of a nation.¹⁶

KÔYAMA: The subject [*sbutai*] of moral energy should be in the nation [*kokumin*]. . . . The nation is the key to every problem. Moral energy has nothing to do with individual or personal ethics, or the purity of blood. Both culturally and politically the nation is the center of moral energy.

KÔSAKA: That is right. The folk [*minzoku*] in itself is meaningless. When the folks gain subjectivity [*sbutaisei*], they necessarily turn into a national folk [*kokka-teki minzoku*]. The folks without subjectivity or self-determination [*jiko gentei*], that is, the folks that have not transformed themselves into a nation [*kokumin*], are powerless. For instance, a folk like the Ainu could not gain independence, and has eventually been absorbed into other folks [that has been transformed into] a nation.

I wonder if the Jews would follow the same fate. I think the Subject of World History must be a national folk in this sense.¹⁷

One can hardly discern any difference between this understanding of modern subjectivity and that of the Hegelian dialectic. The *modern* nation must be an embodiment of the will (*jiko-genteisei*); that is, the subject of the nation is, at any time, self-determination (the determination of the self as such) and the determining self (the self that determines itself). And the *modern* nation must externalize itself in order to be aware of itself and to realize its will. Hence, it is, without exception, a nation representing itself in the state; it is the synthesis of folks (irrational) and the state (rational).

The nation is the reason concretized in an individuality (*kobetsusei* = folk), so that the nation cannot coincide with the folk immediately. In order for the folk to transform itself into the nation, the folk must be negatively mediated by other folks; that is, the stronger folk must conquer and subjugate weaker folks in order to form the nation.¹⁸

The fragility of their antimodern rhetoric becomes all the more apparent when the pluralistic world history is discussed in the context of the contemporary historical situation. In another roundtable talk titled "Tôakyôeiken no rinrisei to rekishisei" (Ethics and Historicity of the Greater East Asian Coprosperity Sphere"), held about three months after the previous one and with the same participants, they directly relate the issue of history to the Sino-Japanese relationship.¹⁹

KÔSAKA: The Sino-Japanese war [*shina jihen*] involves many things and is extremely complex. But the final factor that determines the outcome should be the question "Which morality is superior, the Japanese or Chinese one?" Of course, political and cultural maneuvers are very important. Yet our moral attitude toward the Chinese is even more important, perhaps. We should consider measures like this: we should send many of our morally excellent people over there to show our moral energy so that the people over there would be persuaded to convince themselves [of our moral superiority]. The Sino-Japanese war is also a war of morality. Now that we have entered the Great Asian War, the war is much larger in scale now, namely, a war between the Oriental morality and the Occidental morality. Let me put it differently, the question is which morality will play a more important role in World History in the future.²⁰

It is amazing that they could still talk not only about the Japanese nation's morality but also about its superiority over the Chinese at that stage. Imagining the national atmosphere around the time these utterances were made, one would rather refrain from asking whether or not Kôsaka was joking. Nevertheless, it is at least worth noting that the relationship between the Japanese and Chinese moralities is put in a sort of dialectic. Kôsaka seems confident that the superiority of Japanese morality would eventually be proven, as if the whole thing had been guaranteed by Japanese military superiority.

For Kôsaka, historical processes involve a series of inevitable conflicts in which the morality of one nation is judged against that of another. Thus the incident in China (the Sino-Japanese war) is a moral war, and the war over the Pacific is also a war that will decide the moral superiority of the

East or the West in view of the ultimate morality of the totality—that is, all of humanity. In this sense, history as he conceives of it is the history of moral development toward the establishment of morality for humanity, toward the ultimate emancipation of humankind. Despite repeated denunciation of the term "humanism," Kôsaka is never able to resist the temptation to justify the status quo in terms of humanism. In other words, his critique of humanism and modernity is, in fact, a thinly disguised celebration thereof.

Apart from the incredible conceit expressed in this passage, there is a theoretical formation that clearly contradicts the premises of pluralistic world history. To imagine the relationship between China and Japan in terms of the war of Chinese and Japanese moralities is to posit a dialectic relationship between the two moralities. This means that, in the optimistic imagination, Japanese morality will eventually prove its universality as well as the particularity of Chinese morality. This would necessarily be a process in which particularities would be subjugated to the domination of a universality. Kôyama said, "[The Chinese] have a subjective sense of their Sinocentrism but do not have an objective consciousness of 'the World.' . . . Although there is morality in China, there is moral energy in Japan."²¹

What we see here is the ugliest aspect of universalism, and it should not be forgotten that this is, after all, the reality of Kôyama's "pluralism." Not only was a Japanese victory over China presumed and unquestioned, but Japanese moral superiority was also assumed, the temporary military superiority of Japan (which, after all, was faked by the national mass media) was thought to guarantee the right to speak condescendingly. If this dialectic movement between universalistic and particularistic moralities had proceeded as it was imagined, it would eventually have eliminated the pluralistic coexistence of many histories and traditions passionately advocated in the critique of *monistic history*. Within the scheme of the universalism-particularism pair, the plural subjects will gradually be organized as many particularities subjected to a single center of universalism.

How, then, can one possibly avoid the detested *monistic history*? For world history would be no different from the history of progress toward the complete dominion by one center. Kôyama and Kôsaka thought they were entitled to accuse the Chinese for their lack of a world-historical sense, for their insolence, and finally for their particularism; they felt entitled to do so because they thought they were speaking from the position of universalism.

Pluralistic world history proves itself to be another version of monistic

history. I do not know how one could possibly avoid this conclusion when the subjects of world history are equated with nations. How can one put forward an effective critique of modernity when one affirms and extols national identity as the sole base for historical praxis? These thinkers' critique of modernity is at best some guise of anti-imperialism under which Japanese modernity (including the inevitable consequences of its expansionist impulse) is openly endorsed. What annoyed them in monistic history is not the fact that many people were suppressed and deprived of a sense of self-respect because of its Eurocentric arrangement. What they were opposed to was the fact that, in that Eurocentric arrangement of the world, the putative unity of the Japanese happened to be excluded from the center. They wanted to change the world so that the Japanese would occupy the position of the center and of the subject that determines other particularities in its own universal terms. In order to achieve this goal, they would approve anything Western on the condition that it conformed to the structure of the modern nation-state. Far from being an anti-Western determination, what motivated them was the will to pursue the path of modernization. Insofar as centralization and homogenization are part and parcel of modernization, their philosophy of world history paradoxically illustrates the inevitability of war by showing the impossibility of coexistence *outside* of the West. Even in its particularism, Japan was already implicated in the ubiquitous West, so that neither historically nor geopolitically could Japan be seen as *outside* of the West. This means that, in order to criticize the West in relation to Japan, one has necessarily to begin with a critique of Japan. Likewise, the critique of Japan necessarily entails the radical critique of the West. Insofar as one tries to speak from the position of *us*, the putative unity of either the West or Japan, one would never be able to escape the domination of the universalism-particularism pair: one would never be effective in criticism, no matter how radical a posture one might put on.

After Japan's defeat in 1945, Takeuchi Yoshimi was one of those few intellectuals who engaged themselves in the serious examination of Japanese morality in relation to China, and openly admitted that the war Japan had just lost was a war between Chinese and Japanese moralities. He brilliantly demonstrated the inevitability of Japan's defeat on both socioeconomic and moral grounds. However, Takeuchi was also one of the few who refused to ignore a certain legitimacy in what incited many, including the philosophers of world history, to a rhetoric of *pluralism*, despite the fact that, during the war, he was among those who despised and rejected the idea of a "Greater East Asian Coprosperity Sphere" advocated by the

philosophers of world history. By every means he tried to sustain an intellectual concern about the problem of Western domination, which, of course, did not disappear with Japan's defeat.

In a manner similar to Kōyama's definition of monistic history, Takeuchi draws attention to the involuntary nature of modernity for the non-West. Here, too, the term "modernity" must signify not only a temporal or chronological, but also a spatial, concept in the sense that the significance of modernity for the non-West would never be grasped unless it is apprehended in the non-West's spatial relationship to the West. Modernity for the Orient, according to Takeuchi, is primarily its subjugation to the West's political, military, and economic control. The modern Orient was born only when it was invaded, defeated, and exploited by the West; that is, only when the Orient became an object for the West did it enter modern times. The truth of modernity for the non-West, therefore, is its reaction to the West; Takeuchi insists that it must be so precisely because of the way modernity is shaped with regard to the problematic concerning the subjective identity of the West:

Modernity is the self-recognition of Europe, the recognition of Europe's modern self as distinct from her feudal self, a recognition rendered possible only in a specific historical process in which Europe liberated itself from the feudalistic (with her liberation being marked by the emergence of free capital in the economy, or the establishment of the modern personality as an independent and equal individual in human relations). Europe is possible only in this history, and inversely it can be said that history is possible only in Europe. For history is not an empty form of time. It consists in an eternal instance at which one struggles to overcome difficulties in order thereby to be one's own self. Without this, the self would be lost; history would be lost.²²

The West (Europe) cannot be the West unless it continually strives to transform itself; positively the West is not, but only reflectively it is.

Her [Europe] capital desires to expand her market, the missionaries are committed in the mandate to expand the kingdom of heaven. Through ceaseless tension, the Europeans endeavor to be their own selves. This ceaseless effort to be their own selves makes it impossible for them to remain what they are in themselves. They must take a risk of losing themselves in order to be their own selves.²³

The idea of progress or historicism would be unintelligible without reference to this continual search for the self, a ceaseless process of self-recentering.

Inevitably, the self-liberation of the West resulted in its invasion of the

Orient. In invading the Orient, "[Europe] encountered the heterogeneous, posited herself in opposition to it." At the same time, Europe's invasion gave rise to capitalism in the Orient. No doubt, the establishment of capitalism there was taken as a consequence of the West's survival expansion, and it was thought to testify to progress in the history of the world and the triumph of reason. Of course, the Orient reacted to the West's expansion and put up resistance to it. Yet in this very resistance it was integrated into the dominion of the West and served, as a moment, toward the completion of Eurocentric and monistic world history. In this scheme, the Orient was to play the role of self-consciousness that had failed in the continual dialectic reaffirmation and recentering of the West as a self-consciousness that was certain of itself; it also served as an object necessitated in the formation of the West as a knowing subject. Thus the Orient was expected to offer an endless series of strange and different things whereby the familiarity of *our* things was implicitly affirmed. The knowledge of Oriental things was shaped after the existing power relation between the West and its other-object, and, as shown in Edward Said's *Orientalism*, it continued to affirm and solidify that relation. But we must not forget that the Orient thus known cannot be represented to itself; it can be represented only to the West.

On the one hand, the West is delimited, opposed to that which is alien to it; it needs its other for its identity. On the other hand, the West is ubiquitous and invisible as it is assumed to be the condition of the possibility for the universal validity of knowledge. Only in a discursive formation called modernity is universality possible as essentially Western universality. But, Takeuchi says, "The Orient resists." He reiterates the term "resistance."

The Orient resists; it disturbs the West's dominion. It is important to note that the modernization of the Orient was prompted by this resistance. Here, Takeuchi stresses that if the Orient had not resisted it would never have been modernized. Accordingly, the modernization of the Orient should not be thought of as a mere imitation of Western things, although there have been cases in which the will to resist was very weak, as in Japan's modernization. As is amply shown by the fact that the Orient had to modernize and adopt things from the West in order to resist it, the modernization of the Orient attests to an advance or success for the West, and, therefore, it is always Westernization or Europeanization. So it necessarily appears that, even in its resistance, the Orient is subjugated to the mode of representation dominated by the West. Its attempt to resist the West is doomed to fail; the Orient cannot occupy the position of a sub-

ject. Is it possible, then, to define the Orient as that which can never be a subject?

Neither the West nor the Orient are immediately referents. The unity of the West is totally dependent on the manner in which resistance is dealt with in the gathering together of its subjective identity. At this juncture, Takeuchi's explanation of the term "resistance" seems to begin to oscillate between two different readings.

Meanwhile, Takeuchi points out, the Orient does not connote any internal commonality among the names subsumed under it; it ranges from regions in the Middle East to those in the Far East. One can hardly find anything religious, linguistic, or cultural that is common among those varied areas. The Orient is neither a cultural, religious, or linguistic unity, nor a unified world. The principle of its identity lies outside itself; what endows it with some vague sense of identity is that the Orient is that which is excluded and objectified by the West in the service of its historical progress. From the outset, the Orient is a shadow of the West. If the West did not exist, the Orient would not exist either. According to Takeuchi, this is the primary definition of modernity. For the non-West, modernity means, above all, the state of being deprived of its own subjectivity. Does the non-West, then, have to acquire its own subjectivity? His answer harbors the kind of ambiguity characteristic of his entire discourse. "For there is no *resistance*, that is, there is no wish to maintain the self (the self itself does not exist). The absence of resistance means that Japan is not Oriental. But at the same time, the absence of the self-maintenance wish (no self) means that Japan is not European. This is to say, Japan is nothing."²⁴

Takeuchi says "Japan is nothing." But is Japan really nebulous and amorphous without any inclination toward self-recentering? Because Japan does not wish to be itself, to posit itself anew, he argues, it fails to be itself and also fails to be like the West. His denunciation of contemporary Japan makes it seem as if Japan had not had any representation of itself, or a self that was not concretized in various institutions: as if there had not been any state that imposed the sense of a nation on those living in the region; as if those living in the region did not identify themselves with the nation; as if the nation called Japan had existed for thousands of years merely as a natural community.

Japan is a modern nation. Precisely in their effort to sustain themselves, people in Japanese territories have organized themselves as a nation and represented themselves in the state of that nation. How could a nation without a sense of identity possibly launch a war that lasted for more than fifteen years, resulting in an amazing amount of human and economic

wreckage? It seems that Takeuchi is caught in the historico-geopolitical pairing of the premodern and the modern, according to which, since the West is modern, Japan should be premodern, or at least nonmodern. Instead of analyzing the pairing of the West and the non-West excluded by the West, Takeuchi assumes the validity of this pairing in talking about Japan. But his analytical device collapses upon the object of its analysis.

This sort of misapprehension seems to derive from Takeuchi's conviction that, in order to counteract the West's aggression, the non-West must form nations. Then what is heterogeneous to the West can be organized into a kind of monolithic *resistance* against the West, but within the nation homogeneity must predominate. Without constructing what Hegel called the "universal homogenous sphere," the nation would be impossible. Thus, whether one likes it or not, the modernization process in the formation of the entire nation should entail the elimination of heterogeneity within. Exactly the same type of relationship as that between the West and the non-West will be reproduced between the nation as a whole and heterogeneous elements in it. In this context, the nation is always represented by the state so that it is a subject to which its members are subject, whereas heterogeneous elements remain deprived of their subjectivity so that they are not subject to the subject.

Insofar as he never loses faith in the universal emancipation of mankind, Takeuchi is certainly a modernist. Therefore, he believes that monistic world history is, after all things are considered, an inevitability and that, consequently, the universal emancipation will be realized not by the West but by the Orient. In history, he says, the true subject is the Orient. In the meantime, we must endure the elimination of heterogeneity in order to construct the nation, the subject of history. It is misleading to say that Takeuchi is antimodern; he rejects only limited aspects of modernization.

On the other hand, one can detect a thread suggesting a different reading of his term "resistance." For the Orient, resistance is supposed never to contribute to the formation of its subjective identity. In other words, resistance is not negation by means of which a subject is posited in opposition to what it negates. Hence, resistance has to be likened to negativity, as distinct from negation, which continues to disturb a putative stasis in which the subject is made to be adequate to itself. Here, Takeuchi is concerned with something fundamental to the whole problem of modernity and the West.

I do not know what resistance is. I cannot logically pursue the meaning of resistance. . . . I dread the rationalist belief that everything can be brought

into presence. I am afraid of the pressure of an irrational will that underlies the rationalistic belief. And to me that seems to be [the essence of] Europe. [Until recently] I have noticed that I have been haunted by this feeling of fear. When I realized that many thinkers and writers in Japan, except for a few poets, did not feel what I felt and were not afraid of rationalism, and when I noticed that what they had produced in the name of rationalism—including materialism—did not look like rationalism, I felt insecure. Then I came across Lu Xun. I saw Lu Xun enduring this kind of fear all by himself. . . . If I were asked "What is resistance?" the only answer I have is "It is what you find in Lu Xun."²⁵

Resistance comes from a deeply rooted fear of the will to represent everything, the will essential for modern subjectivity. Lu Xun exemplifies a desperate effort to resist subjectivity, to resist subjection to subjectivity, and finally to resist subjection to the subject.

For Lu Xun, it is impossible to assume an observational and indifferent attitude, that is, the attitude of humanism. For the fool [Lu Xun himself] would never be able to save the slave as humanism naively hopes. . . . The slave is a slave precisely because he seeks to be saved. Hence, when he is awakened, he will be put in the state of "no road to follow," of "the most painful moment in life." He will have to experience the state of self-awareness that he is a slave. And he has to endure the fear. As soon as he gives in and begs for help, he will lose the self-awareness of his own slave status. In other words, the state of "no road to follow" is the awakened state, so if he still believes that there is a road to march on, he must be dreaming.

And he continues:

The slave must refuse his slave identity, but at the same time, he must refuse the dream of liberation as well. He must be a slave with the acutest sense of his miserable status, and remain in the "most painful awakened state in his life." He must remain in the state that, because there is no road to follow, he rejects a wish to be someone other than what he is. This is the meaning of despair that exists in Lu Xun and that makes Lu Xun possible. . . . There is no room for humanism here.²⁶

Above all, resistance here is that which disturbs the possible representational relationship between the self and its image. It is something that resists the formation of those identities that subject people to various institutions. Yet this does not liberate them, this does not lead to emancipation because people are often subject to what they fear most through the words

of emancipation. Possibly one should leave them in their sleep rather than "cry aloud to wake a few of the lighter sleepers, making those unfortunate few suffer the agony of irrevocable death." But if one is determined to be awake, one must at least resist one's hope to go beyond. What enabled Takeuchi to criticize modernity seems to come from this sense of resistance, although Takeuchi is so deeply committed to the values of modernity. This is what separated him from those who naively imagine the possibility of overcoming the modern. By the same gesture of emancipation, they all fall into the trap set up by modernity. As Takeuchi has given up an emancipatory ideology, he can be all the more effectively critical of modernity despite his commitment to certain modern values.

The sense of uncertainty that the term "postmodernity" provokes may indicate the gradual spreading of this resistance. I think I understand the term "play" best when I, unjustifiably perhaps, associate it with what Takeuchi saw in Lu Xun.²⁷ Only at this stage one could talk about hope, but rather hesitantly, just as Lu Xun did in his short story "My Old Home."

The access of hope made me suddenly afraid. When Jun-tu had asked for the incense burner and candlesticks I had laughed up my sleeve at him, to think he was still worshipping idols and would never put them out of his mind. Yet what I now called hope was no more than an idol I had created myself. The only difference was that what he desired was close at hand, while what I desired was less easily realized.

As I dozed, a stretch of jade-green seashore spread itself before my eyes, and above a round golden moon hung from a deep blue sky. I thought: hope cannot be said to exist, nor can it be said not to exist. It is just like roads across the earth. For actually the earth had no roads to begin with, but when many men pass one way, a road is made.²⁸

6

Death and Poetic Language in Postwar Japan¹

Some works of poetry interfere with history rather than preserve and record it. Often the writing or reading of poetry constitutes a historical practice in terms of which the general conception of historical experience itself is altered. The case in point here is Japanese poetry produced within the few decades after Japan's defeat in the Fifteen-Year War (the Second World War).

It has been claimed that much of postwar Japanese poetry was prompted by the experience of death and destruction during the war, and that it was, in one way or another, a deferred response to it. It has also been claimed that it pertained to some psychology of guilt that not only the poets but also many of the writers of this generation shared, and that obviously derived from the fact that they survived the war and left behind their loved ones and those they had themselves killed in the past. We cannot help recognizing some undeniable reality in these accounts about postwar poetry. But, insofar as one neglects to inquire into the internal process of the production of poetic texts, one would certainly fail to take note that postwar poetry has constituted a kind of historical practice and that it was at least an attempted interference with history, even if it may be said to be an aborted one.

By no means can postwar poetry be regarded as an eyewitness account

- no nihon" (Watsuji's *Ethics and Japan during the Fifteen-Year War*, *Jōkyō* (September 1992).
- 49 Watsuji Tetsurō *Zenshū*, vol. 8, p. 125.
- 50 Maeda Ai, "Shanghai 1925," in *Toshibūkan no naka no bungaku* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1982), pp. 365–401. For economic development and politics, see Sherman Cochran, *Big Business in China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980), pp. 171–200; Nakamura Naosuke, *Kindai Nihon meigyō to chūgoku* (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1982); Peter Duus, "Zaikabō: Japanese Cotton Mills in China, 1895–1937," in *The Japanese Informal Empire in China, 1895–1937* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1989), pp. 314–29; Banno Junji, "Japanese Industrialists and Merchants and the Anti-Japanese Boycotts in China, 1919–1928," in *The Japanese Informal Empire in China, 1895–1937*.
- 51 Maeda, "Shanghai 1925," p. 371.
- 52 Mao Dun, *Rainbow*, trans. Madeleine Zelin (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992). The last two chapters of this unfinished novel are particularly concerned with the same historical developments and the transformation of characters' consciousness brought about by those developments as is Yokomitsu's *Shanghai*. These two authors approached the turbulent encounter of the Chinese and the Japanese in Shanghai almost simultaneously from opposite sides.
- 53 Maeda, "Shanghai 1925," p. 394.
- 54 Watsuji Tetsurō *Zenshū*, vol. 8, p. 127.
- 55 *Ibid.*, emphasis in the original.
- 56 It is misleading to characterize Shanghai simply as a city under colonial control. For a historical development of Chinese participation in the city's administrative structure, see Tonoki Kei'ichi, *Shanghai* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1942). It is important to note that, when Watsuji was in Shanghai in February 1927, many parks in the city were still off-limits to the local population. According to Tonoki, it was on June 1, 1928, one year and four months later, that all the public parks were open (pp. 134–35).
- 57 *Ibid.*, p. 128.
- 58 In this respect, the most perceptive and powerful reading of Yokomitsu's *Shanghai* can be found in Kamei Hideo, *Shintai, kono sushiginaru mono* (Tokyo: Renga Shobō Shinsha, 1984), pp. 122–46.
- 59 This documentary film recorded Japanese military actions in Shanghai and was produced by Toho Company, and edited by Kamei Fumio. As part of the war effort, the film was made in collaboration with the Japanese army and navy ministries to document the Japanese victory in Shanghai. It is important to note, however, that the rules according to which the observing gaze was directed were frequently disrupted. For instance, certain shots were organized not from the perspective of the position of what the Japanese military would have liked, but, for instance, from the perspective of the Chinese refugees. Thus the specific mode of separation between the seer and the seen, without which the subjectivity of the observer could not be constructed, were constantly reversed and called into question. For an insightful discussion of the viewing and the construction of the enemy and "home" at war, see Morio Watanabe, "Image Projection at War: Construction and Deconstruction of the DOMUS through Films on World War II in the U.S. and Japan," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin–Madison, 1992.
- 60 On this issue I learned a lot about the relationship between Yokomitsu Riichi and

- Kobayashi Hideo from conversations with Maeda Ai in 1981. I would like belatedly to express my gratitude to him.
- 61 James Baldwin, *The Fire Next Time* (New York: Dial Press, 1963), p. 10.
- 62 Watsuji Tetsurō *Zenshū*, vol. 8, p. 255. Yet it is important to emphasize that the parallelism involving the Greeks and the Jews or the Greeks and the Romans had already been used so many times in writings about Asia that, in this respect, Watsuji was not innovative at all.
- 63 See, for example, *Ethics [II] (Rinrigaku [chū])*, in Watsuji Tetsurō *Zenshū*, vol. 11 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1962), pp. 421–42.
- 64 Watsuji Tetsurō *Zenshū*, vol. 8, pp. 55–56.
- 65 Slavoj Žižek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (London and New York: Verso, 1989), p. 48.
- 66 *Ibid.*, p. 125.
- 67 *Rinrigaku (jō)*, in Watsuji Tetsurō *Zenshū*, vol. 10, p. 128.
- 68 Žižek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology*, p. 127.
- 69 *Ibid.*
- 70 *Ibid.*
- 71 *Ibid.*, pp. 127–28.
- 72 *Ibid.*, p. 176.
- 73 Karel von Wolferen, *The Enigma of Japanese Power* (New York: Vintage Books, 1990).
- 74 Watsuji's *shutai* therefore maintains the empirico-transcendental structure of subjectivity despite his claim that it is essentially ethical, not epistemological. And he asserts that the practical agent is understood as the transcendental subject (= the whole) being immanent in the empirical subject (= the part) of an individual person. From this conception of the practical subject (*shutai*), Watsuji concludes that the subject of praxis is the whole, that is, the state immanent in an individual. In the case of Watsuji's *shutai*, it is no doubt appropriate to translate it as "the practical subject." See chapter 3 for more on this subject.
- 75 Crary, *Techniques of the Observer*.
- 76 John Stuart Mill, "Coleridge," in *Utilitarianism and Other Essays*, ed. Alan Ryan (London and New York: Penguin Books, 1987), pp. 195–96.
- 77 On the relationship between sympathy or compassion and modern emperor system, see chapter 3.
- 78 Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, p. 31.
- 79 Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, especially pp. 111–97.
- 80 *Japan 2000*, ed. Andrew J. Dougherty. Prepared by the Rochester Institute of Technology, February 1991.

CHAPTER 5: MODERNITY AND ITS CRITIQUE:

THE PROBLEM OF UNIVERSALISM AND PARTICULARISM

- 1 This chapter was originally delivered as a paper at the conference "Problems of Postmodernity" organized by J. Victor Koschmann and Naoki Sakai at Boston Sheraton Inn on April 12 and 13, 1987. Its Japanese translation appeared in the special issue "Nihon no posuto modan" of *Gendai Shisō*, vol. 15–15 (1987): 184–207. An English version was included in the "Postmodernism and Japan" issue of the *South Atlantic Quarterly*, ed. Masao Miyoshi and Harry D. Harootunian, vol. 87, no. 3 (summer 1988): 475–504.

- 2 Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, vol. 1, trans. Thomas McCarthy (Boston: MIT Press, 1984), p. 44.
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 See Richard Rorty, "Habermas and Lyotard on Postmodernity," in *Habermas and Modernity*, ed. Richard J. Bernstein (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1985), p. 167.
- 5 David Pollack, *The Fracture of Meaning* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1986), p. 4.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 One could assert three points: the unity of language is very much like the Kantian "regulative idea" that makes the empirical study of language possible; the unity of language, therefore, is never given in "experience"; and, consequently, the idea of the universal essence of language would never be obtained through the induction of the accumulated empirical data on the increasing number of particular languages.
- 8 It is in the eighteenth century that the unities of Japanese culture, language, and ethnicity as they are conceived of today were brought into existence. In this sense, the Japanese were born in the eighteenth century.
- 9 Pollack, *The Fracture of Meaning*, p. 4.
- 10 Ibid., p. 16.
- 11 Ibid., pp. 3-4.
- 12 Ibid., p. 227.
- 13 Ibid.
- 14 Kôyama Iwao, "Sekaishi no rinen" (The idea of world history), *Sbisô* (April-May 1940).
- 15 Kosaka Masaaki, *Rekishiteki sekai* (Historical world) (1938), in *Kôsaka Masaaki chosakushu* (Complete works of Kôsaka Masaaki), vol. 1 (Tokyo: Risô-sha, 1964), pp. 176-217.
- 16 Kôsaka Masaaki, Suzuki Shigetaka, Kôyama Iwao, and Nishitani Keiji, "Sekaishiteki tachiba to Nihon" (The standpoint of world history and Japan), *Chûdô Kôron* (January 1942).
- 17 Ibid., p. 185.
- 18 Kôsaka, *Rekishiteki sekai*, p. 192.
- 19 Kôsaka Masaaki, Suzuki Shigetaka, Kôyama Iwao, and Nishitani Keiji, "Tôakyûeiken no rinrisei to rekishisei" (Ethics and historicity of the Greater East Asian Coprosperity Sphere), *Chûdô Kôron* (April 1942).
- 20 Ibid., pp. 120-21.
- 21 Ibid., p. 129.
- 22 Takeuchi Yoshimi, "Kindai towa nanika" (What is modernity?) (1948), in *Takeuchi Yoshimi Zenshû* (Complete works of Takeuchi Yoshimi), vol. 4 (Tokyo: Chikuma Publishers, 1980), p. 130.
- 23 Ibid., p. 131.
- 24 Ibid., emphasis added.
- 25 Ibid., p. 144.
- 26 Ibid., pp. 155-57.
- 27 See Jacques Derrida, *DissemiNation*, trans. Barbara Johnson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), pp. 61-171.
- 28 Lu Xun, "My Old Home," in *Selected Stories of Lu Xun*, trans. Yang Hsien-ji and Gladys Yang (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1972), pp. 63-64.

CHAPTER 6: DEATH AND POETIC LANGUAGE IN POSTWAR JAPAN

- 1 This chapter was originally delivered at the International Symposium on Postwar Japan at Rikkyo University in Tokyo on December 17, 1985. Its Japanese translation by Ono Shûichi appeared in *Sengo Nihon no Seishinshi* (Spiritual history of postwar Japan), ed. Kamishima Jirô, Testuo Najita, and Maeda Ai (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1988), pp. 310-34.
- 2 See Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (The Hague: Mouton de Gruyter, 1979).
- 3 For the elucidation of the relationship between the universalized "I" and the system of collective representations, see Jacques Lacan, *Le Séminaire 2: Le moi dans la théorie de Freud et dans la technique de la psychanalyse* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1978), pp. 39-53, among other works of Lacan.
- 4 Yoshimoto Takaaki, "Shikihi no Honshitsu," in *Yoshimoto Takaaki Zenchosakushû*, vol. 5 (Tokyo: Keiso Shobo, 1970), pp. 119-35.
- 5 Awazu Norio, *Gendaishi Shi* (History of contemporary poetry) (Tokyo: Shicho-sha, 1972).
- 6 See Kasai Kiyoshi, *Teroru no Genshō-gaku* (Phenomenology of terror) (Tokyo: Sakuhinsha, 1984), pp. 135-95.
- 7 Ayukawa Nobuo, *Ayukawa Nobuo Shishū* (Tokyo: Shicho-sha, 1968), p. 10.
- 8 Nakagiri Masao, *Nakagiri Masao Shishū 1945-1964* (Tokyo: Shicho-sha, 1964), p. 158.
- 9 Tamura Ryûichi, *Tamura Ryûichi Shishū* (Tokyo: Shicho-sha, 1968), p. 18.
- 10 Ehara Tsurao, *Shi no Bunmei Hihyôteki Seikakû* (Tokyo: Shicho-sha, 1966), p. 149.
- 11 Nakagiri, *Nakagiri Masao Shishū 1945-1964*.
- 12 Tamura Ryûichi, *Tamura Ryûichi Shishū 1 Yonsen no hi to yoru* (Tokyo: Shicho-sha, 1966), pp. 71-73.
- 13 The entire work is as follows:

kimi wa itsumo hitori da
 namida o miseta koto no nai kimi no hitomi niwa
 nigai hikari no yô na mono ga atte
 boku wa suki de

kimi no mômoku no imeji niwa
 kono yo wa kôryô to shita ryooba de ari
 kimi wa hitotsu no kokoro o taezu oitsumeru
 fuyu no hantaa da

kimi wa kotoba o shinjinai
 arayuru kokoro o satsuriku shite kita kimi no
 ashiato niwa
 kyôfu e no fukai akogare ga atte
 boku wa tamaranaku naru

kimi ga aruku hosoi sen niwa
 yuki no ue nimo chi no nioi ga tsuite ite
 donna na ni tôku e hanarete shimmatte mo
 boku niwa wakaru