

Family, State, Family-state: The Role of Family (*kazoku* 家族) in Maruyama Masao's Interpretation of the Family-state (*kazokukokka* 家族國家)

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Abstract

Maruyama Masao (1914–1996) became a leading figure of post-war Japanese democratization with the publication of his essay “Theory and Psychology of Ultra-Nationalism” (1946). The idea of *kokutai* was central to his interpretation of ultra-nationalism as a concept that connected ‘nationalistic’ ideas of the late Tokugawa period with the imperialist propaganda of the 1930s. This concept was linked with the millennia-old Chinese notion of the ruler as the ‘father’ of the people in a land that is an extension of the family (*jia*). In Japan, however, the connection between the family (*kazoku*) and the nation(state) (*kokka*) was based on the imperial lineage that upheld the blood-relation between the *ten-nō* and the deities. In the present paper, I will examine Maruyama’s interpretation of the role of the family in Japanese ultra-nationalism on the basis of his studies “The Ideology and Dynamics of Japanese Fascism” (1948) and “Nationalism in Japan: Its Theoretical Background and Prospects” (1951) (in *Thought and Behavior in Modern Japanese Politics*, 1956; in English, 1963), linking these essays with Maruyama’s war-time studies on the Tokugawa era. I will show that the elements on which Maruyama focused his analysis of the ‘family-state’ (*kazokukokka*) are those features of Japanese nationalism that he had already detected in his war-year studies; that is, features in which he saw the preservation of the Tokugawa social structure of *hōkensei*. I will argue that this social structure was understood by Maruyama as a power structure in which the ‘transfer of oppression’ is possible due to the *decentralized*, i.e., family-like character of social relationships.

Keywords: Maruyama Masao, family, family-state, *kazokukokka*, *hōken*

Družina, država, družinska država: vloga družine (*kazoku* 家族) v Maruyamovi interpretaciji družinske države (*kazokukokka* 家族國家)

Izvilleček

Maruyama Masao (1914–1996) je postal vodilna osebnost povojne japonske demokratizacije z objavo eseja »Teorija in psihologija ultranacionalizma« (1946). Pojem *kokutai* je bil

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osrednjega pomena za njegovo interpretacijo ultranacionalizma kot koncepta, ki je povezoval »nacionalistične« ideje poznega tokugavskega obdobja z imperialistično propagando tridesetih let 20. stoletja. Ta koncept je bil povezan s tisočletno kitajsko predstavo vladarja kot »očeta« ljudstva v deželi, ki predstavlja razširjeno družino (*jia*). Na Japonskem je bila povezava med družino (*kazoku*) in narodom oziroma nacionalno državo (*kokka*) osnovana na cesarski liniji, ki je ohranjala krvno vez med *tennōjem* in božanstvi. V pričujočem prispevku bom proučil Maruyamovo interpretacijo vloge družine v japonskem ultranacionalizmu na podlagi njegovih študij »Ideologija in dinamika japonskega fašizma« (1948) ter »Nacionalizem na Japonskem: teoretično ozadje in obeti« (1951) (v *Mišljenje in delovanje v sodobni japonski politiki*, 1956, v angleščini: 1963), povezujoč te eseje z Maruyamovimi medvojnimi študijami o obdobju Tokugava. Pokazal bom, da so elementi, na katere se je Maruyama osredotočil v analizi »družinske države« (*kazokukokka*), tiste značilnosti japonskega nacionalizma, ki jih je že odkril v svojih medvojnih študijah; torej značilnosti, v katerih je videl ohranitev tokugavske družbene strukture *hōkensei*. Pokazal bom, da je Maruyama to družbeno strukturo razumel kot strukturo moči, v kateri je »prenos zatiranja« mogoč zaradi *decentraliziranega*, to je družinskega značaja družbenih odnosov.

Ključne besede: Maruyama Masao, družina, družinska država, *kazokukokka*, *hōken*

Introduction

Maruyama Masao 丸山眞男 (1914–1996) became a leading figure of post-war Japanese democratization with the publication of his famous essay, “Theory and Psychology of Ultra-Nationalism” (*Chōkokkashugi no ronri to shinri* 超国家主義の論理と心理) in 1946 (1969a). While his interpretation of Japanese ultranationalism was debated heavily (Sasaki 2012, 46–49), there is no doubt that this text played a crucial role in the process of self-understanding of Japanese intellectuals after the tragic end of the war (Mori 2020, 42). A central element of Maruyama’s interpretation was the idea of *kokutai* 国体/國體 (literally ‘the body of the country’, usually translated as ‘national polity’) as a concept that connected ‘nationalistic’ ideas of the late Tokugawa period with the imperialist propaganda of the 1930s. This concept was linked, on the one hand, with the millennia-old Chinese notion of the ruler as the ‘father’ of the people in a land understood as the extension of the family (Chin. *jia* / Jap. *ie* 家). On the other hand, the connection between the family and the country that was rooted in traditional Chinese thought was used in Japanese nationalist ideology in a way that “had little or nothing to do with Confucianism or Confucian family values” (Skya 2009, 288). In Japan, the connection between the family (*kazoku* 家族) and the nation(state) (*kokka* 国家) was based on the imperial lineage that upheld *blood*-relation between the *tennō* 天皇 and the deities (*kami* 神) through Amaterasu Ōmikami 天照大御神 the Sun Goddess, lineal ancestor of Jinmu 神武, the first ruler of Japan

(on Maruyama’s understanding of the ‘charisma’ of the *tennō*, see Tanaka 2009, 137–41). While Maruyama did not detail the role of the family in his frequently analysed essay on ultra-nationalism, he said much more about the topic in his studies “The Ideology and Dynamics of Japanese Fascism” (*Nihon fashizumu no shisō to kōdō* 日本ファシズムの思想と行動, 1948 [1969b]) and “Nationalism in Japan: Its Theoretical Background and Prospects” (*Nihon ni okeru nashonarizumu — Sono shisōteki haikai to tenbō* 日本におけるナショナリズム — その思想的背景と展望, 1951 [1969c]), both included in the volume *Gendai seiji no shisō to kōdō* 現代政治の思想と行動 (1956) translated into English as *Thought and Behavior in Modern Japanese Politics* (1969 [1963]). In the present paper, I will examine Maruyama’s interpretation of the role of the family in Japanese ultra-nationalism based on these writings, linking them with Maruyama’s war-time essays on the Tokugawa era. Through this analysis of Maruyama’s concept of the family I will show that the elements on which Maruyama focused his analysis of the ‘family-state’ (*kazokukokka* 家族國家) are the same features of Japanese nationalism that he had already detected in his war-year studies. These are features in which he saw the preservation of the Tokugawa social structure of *hōkensei* 封建性 (usually translated to Western languages as ‘feudalism’). I will argue that this social structure was primarily understood by Maruyama as a power structure in which the ‘transfer of oppression’ is possible due to the *decentralized*, i.e., family-like character of social relationships.

From *guo* (*koku/kuni*) 國 and *jia* (*ka/ie*) 家 to *kazokukokka* 家族國家

The characters 國 (国) and 家 have a history of their own and as a compound embracing thousands of years. In classical Chinese, *guo* 國 ‘state’, ‘country’ (Karl-gren 1957, 929*o–p*) understood as a ‘territory [of a country]’, that is, a certain unit of the whole,¹ and *jia* 家 meaning ‘house’ or ‘family’ (ibid., 32*a–d*) usually appear together as 國家. While in his notes to the *Mengzi* James Legge explains the term as “a State, with its component great families” (*Mengzi* 2015, 529), in the text he translates such loci in most cases simply as ‘state’ or ‘kingdom’. However, *Mengzi* IVA5 is an important exception.

孟子曰：「人有恆言，皆曰『天下國家』。天下之本在國，國之本在家，家之本在身。」

1 國 is usually translated as ‘state’. In the present study, to be clear about the difference between 1. units of the country as a whole, 2. this whole itself, and 3. the Chinese and Japanese translation of Western notions of ‘state’ and ‘nation’, I will consequently use ‘territory’ in case 國 refers to smaller parts of China or Japan.

Mencius said, ‘People have this common saying, – “The kingdom, the State, the family.” The root of the kingdom is in the State. The root of the State is in the family. The root of the family is in the person *of its Head*.’² (*Mengzi* 2015, 295)

This passage reflects the Confucian concept of the relation between the family and the larger whole that not only consists of but also operates like families. There is a clear correspondence between ‘the realm below Heaven’ (*tianxia* 天下) as the unity of ‘territories’ (*guo* 國), territories as unities of ‘families’ (*jia* 家), and families as unities of ‘persons’ (*shen* 身). The realm below heaven is, at the same time, one unity in itself and a hierarchy of smaller unities. This correlation lies at the core of the Confucian teaching about the strict hierarchical structure of society that is governed by ‘the son of heaven’ (*tianzi* 天子) who is, at the same time, ‘father’ of the people. Thus, filiality (*xiao* 孝) in the family towards the father is the foundation of obedience of the people towards the son of heaven, and of the son of heaven towards *tian* itself. It is based on this idea that the Chinese state is very frequently referred to as ‘family-state’. This term generally lacks specification or historical context, and it is misleading in that it only reflects the ‘family-like’ nature of ‘states’ but loses the meaning clearly present in the passage cited above from the *Mengzi*, i.e., 國家 referring to ‘territories-regions’ (sub-states, sub-principalities) and their ‘families’. In this latter meaning, larger elements of the ‘state’ and their smaller parts appear together, indicating different ‘levels’ of the whole they constitute together.

The same section of the *Mengzi*, IVA5 is referred to in Morohashi, Kamata and Yoneyama (1985, 74) with the meaning (the third definition of *kokka*) given as “the countries [國] of the *zhubou* 諸侯 and the families [家] of the *taifu* 大夫”. This interpretation brings us to the concept of the *fengjian* (*hōken*) 封建 social structure, an important component of Maruyama’s interpretation of Tokugawa society. While the characters of 封建 are regularly used today to translate ‘feudal’ or ‘feudalism’ into Chinese and Japanese, and are translated with the same terms to Western languages, this interpretation is problematic. The ‘*zhubou*’, ‘feudatory prince’ (cf. Karlgren 1957, 113a–d) presided over land rents, being responsible for collecting taxes and transferring them to the king (*wang* 王). The reason why this is important in the present context is the fact that *fengjian* 封建 meant the stipend provided by the *wang* to the *hou* as part of the official revenues (ibid., 1197i–j), i.e., the land *from which* the *hou* collects the rent (see Várnai 2024, 2 ff). 封建 thus refers to the stipend and *not* to the land as *feudum*. The concept behind this term is thus focused on the fact that the *hou* has certain responsibilities in a certain territory based on his relationship with the king. Consequently, in the Japanese context including, as

2 “Of its Head” is Legge’s interpretation.

I will argue, Maruyama's analysis, *bōken* 封建 is most importantly characterized by the *decentralized* social structure related to it as opposed to the centralized structure of *gunken* 郡県 (Chin. *junxian* 郡縣; cf. Zhong 2015, 18 ff).

The same way as the characters of 封建 are associated today with 'feudalism', the characters of 國家 are in most cases associated with the 'state'. It is not possible in the scope of this paper to analyse the transformation of the terminology related to *guojia* 國家 in Chinese, nor the various translations in Western languages. However, it is important to stress a certain shift in the interpretation of the term in Chinese intellectual history. Referring to Gu Yanwu, Levenson argued that by the 17th century it became interpreted as a virtuous deed to make "*tianxia* of *guojia*" (Levenson 1964, 137), that is—in Levenson's definition—a "regime of values" from a "regime of power" (ibid., 133), while "[i]n large part the intellectual history of modern China has been the process of making *guojia* of *tianxia*" (ibid., 138). Levenson rightfully stresses an important aspect in which *guojia* in its modern meaning is opposed to *tianxia*: of *tianxia* (in the original sense of the term) there can only be one, while it is much less contradictory to speak of many/several *guojia*. For the same reason, *tianxia* could not become the equivalent of 'nation'.

The latter argument is not similarly valid in the case of Japan. While the Chinese tradition was based on the notion of a hierarchy with a pyramid structure and one ruling entity, i.e., *tian*, at its top, the Japanese court made it clear as early as on the turn of the 6th and 7th centuries that it was thinking in different categories. The Sui ruler received a letter from the Yamato state under Shōtoku taishi's 聖德太子 regentship, which began:

日出處天子致書日沒處天子無恙。

The son of heaven where the sun rises writes to the son of heaven where the sun sets and trusts he is free from ill-health. (cited by Duthie 2014, 41)

This form of address is considered the first known written example in which the Yamato ruler claimed the same rank as the son of heaven in China (ibid.). This interpretation stresses that *tian* 天, *tianxia* 天下 or *tianzi* 天子 were seen by the Yamato court as terms that could be as creatively modified as other characters and compounds which referred less specifically to Chinese social structures.

While the 'realm below Heaven' had a modified interpretation since the earliest times in a Japanese context, the meaning of 國家 was near to that of its Chinese usage. The *Seventeen Article Constitution*, traditionally also linked to Shōtoku taishi, contains the compound of 國家 three times (Articles 4, 6 and 7), referring to 'the country' as the unity of 'the territories and the families':

[...] 君臣有禮。位次不亂。百姓有禮。國家自治。

[...] when lord and subordinate keep themselves to the rites, ranks are not confused. When the people keep themselves to the rites, the territories and the families are governed by themselves / the country is governed by itself. (Article 4, in *Nihonshoki* 1897, 377, my translation)

While in most translations we find ‘country’ in this paragraph, *kuni* or *kokū* 國 (国) in Japanese could refer to ‘territories’ of the country the same way as in Chinese, making it plausible to understand 國家 as ‘the territories and the families’.

The case of *ie* 家 is somewhat different because over time it came to designate the Japanese family model, yet was still functioning similarly to the Chinese usage in the sense that it preserved its meaning of ‘family’. The Japanese concept of this family was, similarly to the Chinese one, based on the family head. This person was considered father of *all* family members, not only those who had a blood relationship with him (see Eisenstadt 1996, 353 ff). The ruler of the country, the *tennō* 天皇, was sometimes referred to as *tenshi* 天子, as in the above example, based on the Chinese usage of the term and mainly in a ceremonial context (Miyata 2012, 279 ff). However, it was clearly the origin from the *kami* 神 that provided the extraordinary character of the *tennō* as a divine descendant and, legitimized by that, ruler of the country. This uniqueness was shadowed by the shogunal reign from the Kamakura period until the end of the Tokugawa era, although the shogun also filled the symbolic role of family head (Morimoto 2009, 245–46).

The role of the *tennō* as father of the people became a central element of the restoration of his power after the Meiji transition. This was the period in which *kokka* 國家, the same way as its Chinese equivalent, became one of the translation terms of ‘nation’.

At several points in the 1870s the nation appeared in various forms: *kokka* [国家], the nation-as-family; *kokumin* [国民], the nation-as-people; and *minzoku* [民族], the people-as-tribe. All of these expressions functioned less like ‘people’ and more like ‘society’ in that they directed attention to the state’s internal constituents. (Howland 2001, 185)

Howland’s point is well reflected in the fact that 國家 could stand within the same text as the equivalent for ‘nation’ and that of ‘society’, like in Nagamine Hideki’s 永峰秀樹 (1848–1927) translation of Guizot’s *The History of Civilization in Europe* (*Histoire de la civilisation en Europe*) from English (*Yōroppa bunmeishi* 歐羅巴文明史, see Katō and Maruyama 1991, 100, 106). As Howland’s translations ‘the nation-as-...’ also imply, the term 國家 still represented not only its ‘new’

meaning, the ‘nation’, but also the two elements constituting it: the ‘territories’ and the ‘families’.

Still, in texts stressing the relationship between family and nation in the nationalist propaganda of pre-war Japan, we usually find an additional compound, *kazoku* 家族, ‘family’, used together with *kokka*: *kazokukokka* 家族國家. While quite rare, the compound of 家族 can also be found in the Chinese classics, where 族 in itself refers to ‘clan’, ‘kin’ or ‘group of families’ (Karlgrén 1957, 1206a–c). 家族 thus refers to the families of the same ‘stem’. One can see an obvious analogy with the original meaning of *natio* as the ‘stem’, that is, ‘main unit’ of the people, and its modern application to the ‘nation’. The Japanese compound of 家族國家 should in this sense be understood as ‘the country as (one) *natio*’, in the modern sense, ‘nation’.

This *kazokukokka* was, furthermore, conceptually connected with *kokutai* 國體, a central concept of the Meiji period and later of imperialist propaganda. *Kokutai* literally means ‘the body of the country’, also understood as the ‘character’, ‘structure’, or ‘condition of a country’ (Morohashi, Kamata and Yoneyama 1985, 82), usually translated as ‘national polity’ (in the present paper, I will consequently refer to it as *kokutai*). It is important that the interpretation of this term in 19th and 20th century Japan, that is, *kokutai* understood as the ‘essence’ or the distinguishing features of the country in an evaluative sense, significantly differs from the original, rather practical meaning. In 19th century Japan, *kokutai* came to symbolize the essence of the country’s inner characteristics as represented or ‘embodied’ by its divine ruler, the *tennō* as the descendant of the *kami*. “Over time”, as McVeigh writes, “*kokutai* acquired two key components: an unbroken imperial line and the idea of nation as family writ large” (McVeigh 2004, 43). McVeigh refers to Hozumi Yatsuka 穗積八束 (1860–1912) who “originated the ‘nation-state as family’ concept (*Kazoku kokka*) and supported imperial sovereignty, thereby adding theoretical muscle to the idea of *kokutai*” (ibid., 44). As Hozumi saw it, “Our family state is a racial group. Our race consists of blood relatives from the same womb. The family is a small state; the state is a large family” (Hozumi, cited in Minear 1970, 74; on Hozumi’s interpretation of *kokutai*, see Skya 2009, 56 ff).

It seems that ‘family’ (ie 家) being included in the term *kokka* 國家 did not represent the family-character of the nation to an extent sufficient for nationalist requirements of the time, and thus the word *kazoku* 家族 was added to *kokka* to stress the connection between family and nation. If Levenson was right in arguing that making *guojia* of *tianxia* meant stressing ‘power’ instead of ‘values’, then the emphasis on the family in *kazokukokka* can be interpreted as a concept that keeps the ‘power’ (and legal validity) of *kokka*, but (re)adds to it a certain value orien-

tation that stems from the family tradition. This also shows how Japanese state ideology ‘returned’ to the Confucian teaching of filiality (*xiao/kō* 孝) in the midst of nationalist propaganda. However, it must be noted, on the one hand, that the originally Confucian teaching of *xiao* was applied here in a context very different from its classical Chinese sense (not for the first time, considering the Buddhist ‘adaptation’ of *xiao*; see Hamar 2021, 3–4), and that the state to which this concept was now applied *officially* avoided all kinds of traditionalistic foreign influences. On the other hand, this way of using an element of another tradition modified according to the needs of a new social context fits very well in the methods applied by a great many thinkers in the most different periods of Japanese intellectual history. As Oguma says:

by extending the Confucian ethic of ‘respecting one’s parents’ to include ‘loyalty to the emperor’, it was possible both to pacify the populace and rural power-brokers who were anxious about the collapse of their traditional status, and at the same time to channel their loyalties towards the state. Therefore, state education, with the help of the Kiki myths, taught that the ancestors of the Imperial Household who had descended from Heaven were the ancestors of all ‘Japanese’ nationals. (Oguma 2002, 31–32)

In this regard, we find the following passage in Part I of *Kokutai no hongī* 国体の本義 (1937), a symbolic writing of imperialist ideology:

The unbroken line of Emperors, receiving the Oracle of the Founder of the Nation, reign eternally over the Japanese Empire. This is our eternal and immutable national entity. Thus, founded on this great principle, all the people, united as one great family nation (一大家族國家) in heart and obeying the Imperial Will, enhance indeed the beautiful virtues of loyalty and filial piety. This is the glory of our national entity. (*Kokutai No Hongi* 1974, 59)

In this case there is no doubt that the text does not talk about ‘territories’ and ‘families’ in the plural, there is *one* family nation, and that family nation is *great* due to the fact that it is founded on the divine origin of its ruler, that is, on the foundation of a kin relationship between the ruling family and the *kami*. “Since the ancestor of the Emperor was the creator of Japan, all Japanese people were the descendants of the creator, and they were just like a family with the Emperor as a father and the people as children.” (Sasaki 2012, 39) Furthermore, while in the early 7th century the court could imagine more heavens with more realms be-

neath them, it is obvious that there can be no other ruler claiming blood relationship with the *kami*. Against this background, in the next sections, I will focus on Maruyama Masao's interpretation of the peculiarities of the 'family' relationships within Japan in different periods of history.

The Family and the Individual in Maruyama Masao's Analysis of the Tokugawa Period

Maruyama Masao opened his first study on Tokugawa intellectual history, "The Sorai School: Its Role in the Disintegration of Tokugawa Confucianism and Its Impact on National Learning" (*Kinsei jukyō no hatten ni okeru Soraigaku no tokushitsu narabini sono kokugaku tonō kanren* 近世儒教の発展における徂徠学の特質並びにその国学との関連, 1940 [Maruyama Masao *shū* – henceforth: MMS – 1]) with a citation from Hegel's *Die Vernunft in der Geschichte*:

The Chinese and Mongol Empire is the empire of theocratic despotism. Underlying it is the patriarchal condition. A father stands at the summit and controls even what we would subordinate to conscience. In China, this patriarchal principle has been organized into a State. [...] In China, there is a single despot at the summit who leads a systematically constructed government via the many levels of the hierarchy beneath him. Here religious relations as well as family matters are regulated by State laws. The individual is morally selfless. (Hegel 1930, 236–37, cited in Maruyama 1974, 3. Omission by Maruyama)

In the next paragraph, Maruyama continues by stressing that while this situation appears in the most diverse nations, China is unique in the sense that the described circumstances do not change with time. The state "as it is founded upon family relationships", he says, remains as it is, producing what Hegel famously called "unhistorical history" (*ungeschichtliche Geschite*), (Hegel 1930, 234–35, cited in Maruyama 1974, 4).

While Maruyama acknowledges that "Hegel is here thinking in terms of the pattern of his philosophy of history" (*ibid.*, 3), he basically agrees with Hegel's account of China as the preliminary stage of history that does not actually enter the progression of *Weltgeschichte*. This Hegelian interpretation symbolically represents a view of China that places 'patriarchal' structures in a negative light and labels China as belonging to the 'childhood' of history, understood as a linear developmental process. This interpretation replaced 17th- and 18th-century idealistic descriptions of China such as those of Leibniz and Voltaire, who admired

paternal authority as the foundation of the *philosophia practica* of the Chinese (see Davis 1983), and precedes later 19th-century thinkers—such as Tocqueville, Mill and Marx—who were no longer satisfied by declaring the ‘static’ character of China but enquired about the possibility of the ‘opening’ of the Chinese empire (see Takó 2024). Maruyama was, beyond doubt, well aware of notions of China’s ‘static’ and ‘despotic’ character that were more recent and more sophisticated than Hegel’s—still, he chose Hegel’s description of China as a framework for his own analysis of Tokugawa intellectual history. This world-historical perspective suited Maruyama’s approach so well because it interpreted Chinese social structures as essentially unchangeable; not as structures that secured stability but as structures that hindered actual historical change. These structures were, as Maruyama saw them, closely linked with the family: “The closed family society under the absolute authority of the patriarch constituted the unit of social relations. The state structure was built hierarchically upon this basis, and at its summit was the despot with his ‘fatherly care’” (Maruyama 1974, 4). For Maruyama the consequence of this hierarchy was, as is shown by the opening quote cited above, the “morally selfless” individual.

Maruyama emphasizes the rigidity of social relations based on the samurai family in a similar vein when describing the social structure of Tokugawa Japan:

Aside from his rights as parent and husband, the head of the samurai family did not have any special patriarchal legal authority. But because the family system was dependent upon the politico-economic relationship of the stipend [*hōroku* 封祿], the real power of the head of the family over its members was very great and the latter could hardly ever assert their individuality against the paternal and conjugal authority of the former. (Maruyama 1974, 11, I omitted the term ‘feudal’ from the translation of *hōroku*, for the original see MMS 1, 134)

In a footnote to this part, Maruyama quotes Fukuzawa Yukichi’s 福沢諭吉 (1835–1901) description of the family structure of the era that, as Fukuzawa writes, also symbolizes society as a whole. “The head of the family was like an autocratic dictator and held the entire family authority in his hands. He dealt with the members of his family with stern dignity.” (*Zoku Fukuzawa zenshū*, [1932], V, 631–32, cited in Maruyama 1974, 11. n. 17). Maruyama wrote similarly about Tokugawa social structures in a note in the second Tokugawa-study:

the family system that, together with the master-servant relationship, was the fulcrum of the *hōken* legal system acquired a clear-cut political significance and began to emerge as an important element in *hōken* authority relations, owing to the indissoluble link between the family [*ie* 家] and the stipend [*hōroku* 封祿] among the samurai and the establishment of Five-Man-Groups (groupings of five to ten heads of households who were held jointly responsible for the payment of taxes and violations of the law) among the common people. (Maruyama 1974, 194. n. 5, translation altered in terms of *hō(ken)*—for the original see MMS 2, 9, n. 1)

From these descriptions of the *hōken* social structure of Tokugawa Japan one understands that Maruyama saw the ‘family system’ as the static foundation of ‘paternal’ authority *outside* the family not only in China but also in Japan. A central question related to these authority relations was whether and to what extent there was space for individuality to develop; that is, whether the individual had any space to exist outside of or separated from the structure of society. In Maruyama’s interpretation of China—built on Hegelian grounds—such a process could not even be started there. However, the situation is, according to Maruyama, different in Tokugawa Japan. This assumption lends great importance to Ogyū Sorai 荻生徂徠 (1666–1728) and particularly to his separation of ‘public’ (*kōteki* 公的) and ‘private’ (*shiteki* 私的) in Maruyama’s analysis. Although he does not talk about the ‘family’ as such in relation to this topic, his statements about the separation of ‘public’ and ‘private’ are closely linked to the ideas about the family and the possibilities of ‘individuality’ appearing. At the same time, one can easily find the connection with the circumstances of Maruyama’s present:

‘public’ refers to political, social, or external matters, while ‘private’ refers to individual, internal matters. As these definitions are more or less identical with the meanings these words have today, it hardly seems necessary to discuss them. [...] The independence of the public domain in every sphere of human activity, which implies the liberation of the private domain, is surely the crucial hallmark of ‘the modern’. (Maruyama 1974, 103)

In the following section, I will return to Maruyama’s discussion of the “failure to draw any clear line of demarcation between the public and the private domains” (Maruyama 1969a, 6) in modern Japan. Now I turn to the question of how the topic of Sorai’s separation of ‘public’ and ‘private’ is linked in Maruyama’s interpretation with the problem of Japan’s entering ‘world-history’.

Maruyama's attention turned to Tokugawa Confucianism while reading Fukuzawa's *An Outline of Theories of Civilisation* (*Bunmeiron no gairyaku* 文明論之概略) (Hiraishi 2003, 244). In the early 1940s, parallel to the Tokugawa studies, Maruyama wrote a paper titled "Fukuzawa Yukichi's critique of Confucianism" (*Fukuzawa Yukichi no jukyō hiban* 福沢諭吉の儒教批判, 1942), and it was under the influence of Fukuzawa that he turned against the views of his influential contemporary, Tsuda Sōkichi 津田左右吉 (1873–1961), who doubted the importance of Confucianism in Tokugawa times (Hiraishi 2003, 248; for a critical reading of Maruyama's arguments against Tsuda see Paramore 2016, 173). In contrast, Maruyama stressed that Confucianism still affected the whole society, albeit not in a direct and obvious way:

since it became usual that obligations of the *hōken* system [*hōkenteki mibun* 封建的身分] were perceived in Confucian categories, it was quite natural that the Confucian ethics of the five relationships and the five virtues [*gorin gojō* 五倫五常] infiltrated, almost unconsciously and step by step, all social relationships as conceptual bounds. (MMS 2, 140)

Fukuzawa's critique of Tokugawa Confucianism was harsh in so far as he made it responsible for all the characteristics of the period that he considered negative.

For who were the ones teaching government autocracy [*sensei* 專制]? Even if in essence all government contains an element of autocracy, were not those who were helping that element develop and encouraging it none other than the teaching of Confucian scholars [*jugakusharyū no gakumon* 儒学者流の學問]? Of all the Confucianists who have ever been in Japan, those who enjoyed a reputation as most talented and most capable were the greatest experts on autocracy, and the greatest tools of the government. [...] Alas, we Japanese of today are their descendants! For us to be practicing autocracy in this day and age, and to be subjected to it, is not entirely the fault of the present generation; we have inherited this poison [*doku* 毒] from our distant ancestors. But who are the ones who helped spread this contagion? The contribution of the Confucian teachers was great. (Fukuzawa 2008, 197, translation slightly altered – for the original see Fukuzawa 1898, V, 27–28)

Maruyama saw the 'historical role' of Fukuzawa's critique of Confucianism in the fact that it connected Fukuzawa's ideal of 'independence and liberty' (*dokuritsujiyū* 独立自由) with his ideal of 'national sovereignty' (*kokkenshugi* 国権主義) (MMS 2, 147–48, on *dokuritsujiyū* see Kitaoka 2018, 130 ff). Although he separated an

‘early’ and a ‘late’ period in Fukuzawa’s oeuvre, Maruyama’s critics rightly point out that he did not stress at all the process through which Fukuzawa moved from an interpretation of a half-civilized Japan *and* China to the opposition of a civilized Japan *vs.* barbarian China, criticizing China for much more than its Confucianism (Koyasu 2003, 12–20; Sakamoto 2001, 149 ff). In the midst of the imperialist propaganda of the late 1930s that built the unity of *kokutai* on the divine blood line of the *tennō*, Fukuzawa was referred to by Maruyama simply as someone who made the autonomous individual the foundation of an autonomous nation (Karube 2008, 70–72), and who turned against Confucianism because of its ‘merging of ethics and politics’ and ‘fixing’ Tokugawa social relationships (Kersten 1996, 71).

These relationships are usually referred to with the term *hōken*(*teki*) 封建(的). In the framework of the present paper it is impossible to analyse the complex question of the Tokugawa period under the heading of ‘feudalism’. It is important, however, that for Maruyama, *hōken* meant a *decentralized* social structure existing in opposition to a centralized, *gunken* 郡県 society, rather than a system similar to that of European ‘feudalism’. This opposition of *hōken* and *gunken* was clearly described by Ogyū Sorai himself in *Bendō* 辨道, characterizing *hōken* with the symbol of the family:

The way of the early kings is the way that brings peace to the realm below heaven. In later generations, none of those who discussed statecraft (*keizai* 經濟) could avoid addressing the early kings’ way. However, in later generations *fengjian/hōken* 封建 gave way to *junxian/gunken* 郡縣, and the way of the early kings became an irrelevant banner for the world [to wave as it would]. [...] Generally speaking, *fengjian/hōken* government treats the people like they are part of a family, in a father-son [relationship]. With *junxian/gunken*, there are only laws to rely upon. (Sorai 2006, 150–51, translation altered in the cases of *hōken* and *gunken* only – for the original see Sorai 1973, 203)

Sorai was, obviously, talking about *hōken* as a desirable state of society as opposed to the despotic character of *gunken* (on Sorai’s understanding of *hōken*, see Kurozumi 2003, 388 ff). In contrast, Maruyama was interested in Fukuzawa’s critique of Confucianism precisely because Fukuzawa interpreted the Confucian teaching as a peculiar kind of despotism in a *decentralized* social system that was treated by its leaders as a family, i.e., as a group of blood-relatives *instead of* a group of ‘individuals’. Based on this interpretation, Maruyama contrasted Tokugawa era decentralization with Meiji period centralization, the latter of which, as reflected

in Fukuzawa's early writings, was meant to ensure the sovereignty of Japan *based on* the independence of the Japanese people.

While the first Tokugawa study focused on Ogyū Sorai's 'politicization of Confucianism' and separation of 'public' and 'private', the second work centred around "Nature and Invention in Tokugawa Political Thought" (*Kinsei Nihon seijishisō ni okeru 'shizen' to 'sakui'* 近世日本政治思想における「自然」と「作為」, 1941–1942 [MMS2]). Maruyama's aim in this study was also to

demonstrate that this issue is not simply a technical problem inside the framework of *hōken* society, but that it implies the world-historical problem [*sekaishitekina mondai* 世界史的な問題] of the conflict between the medieval view of social and state [*kokka* 国家] institutions and the modern bourgeois view. (Maruyama 1974, 191–92, translation altered in case of *hōken* only—for the original see MMS 2, 7)

On one side of this world-historical conflict, as Maruyama saw it, there stood the 'natural' unity that was symbolized in early Tokugawa Japan by Zhu Xi's *ri* 理 (Chin. *lǐ*), a concept that unified diverse elements of the Confucian understanding of how the 'ten thousand things' (all things, including man) came into being and operated (regarding *ri*, see Maruyama 1974, 195 ff). Regarding the creation of the way (Chin. *dao* / Jap. *tō/michi* 道), Ogyū Sorai responded that the way was neither *ri*, nor the 'Way of Heaven and Earth' but an *invention* of the sages (Chin. *shengren* / Jap. *seijin* 聖人). By claiming this he took a revolutionary step in Japanese intellectual history (Maruyama 1974, 207). This step, however, contains a strong internal tension: while Sorai tried to bring back the *hōken* social structure to its original, harmonious form, at his time these structures were already falling apart. When Sorai replaced the natural order with an invented order that can be created again, at any time, by anyone, he "brought forth a demon [*mamono* 魔物] whose actions he was unable to control" (Maruyama 1974, 238; MMS 2, 49). The reason for that is to be found in the social structure of Tokugawa society, which was

a *hierarchic structure of immanent values* [*naizaiteki kachi no kaisōteki taikei* 内在的価値の階層的体系, emphasis in the original]. The values of the total social system are diffused and embedded in each closed social sphere. As a result, each of these social spheres plays an indispensable part in the preservation of the total structure. [...] The instant this closure is breached and the values that have been distributed between the different social spheres condense at the top of the pyramid, the *hōken* structure collapses. When control ceases to be indirect and *pouvoirs intermédiaires* are absorbed by the supreme authority; when the material facilities necessary for administration

[*gyōsei* 行政] (such as buildings, horses, military equipment, etc.) are removed from the private ownership of the administrators and concentrated in the hands of the state; when the broadly distributed legislative and judicial powers are unified under a central authority—then we have the birth of a modern nation-state [*kindaikokka* 近代国家]. These illustrations should clarify the meaning of the statement that the Sorai school corroded the *hōken* order. (Maruyama 1974, 244–45, translation altered in case of *hōken*, emphasis in the original – for the original see MMS 2, 54)

The birth of a modern nation-state thus means the dissolution of certain values. Still, only the complete development of this modern state could mean real historical progression. This is a central point for Maruyama. Although in the Meiji period Japan established a modern nation-state in terms of its institutions, the country still lacked a modern individual in the sense of the separation of ‘public’ and ‘private’. This was due, first, to the fact that in *kokugaku* 国学, particularly Motoori Norinaga’s 本居宣長 (1730–1801) thought, the spheres separated by Sorai were reunited and the ‘private’ was melted again into the ‘public’ (Maruyama 1974, 171 ff); second, because all reforms were conducted from above; third, because industry had not reached a proper level of development; and fourth, because the ideology of *sonnō* 尊王 (‘reverence for the *tennō*’), which was in favour of the new system, was linked with *jōi* 攘夷 (‘expelling barbarians’), which included the earlier framework proper for keeping foreigners away from the country (ibid., 299–304). Despite the efforts of Meiji intellectuals who were to build national unity on the unity of individuals (cf. Karube 2008, 81–82), the period could not fully overcome its ties to the Tokugawa era. This situation was interpreted by Maruyama, so to speak, as a pause in the progression of world-history in the sense of Hegelian *Weltgeschichte* (Conrad 1999, 166 ff). Japan *could* but *did not* enter that world-history. In the next section, and using Maruyama’s interpretation of the role of the family in nationalist propaganda, I will analyse how this led, in his understanding, to the events of World War II.

Maruyama Masao on the Role of *kazokukokka* 家族國家 in Ultra-nationalism

Although “Maruyama’s post-war works barely mention Confucianism at all”, mainly due to “Confucianism’s post-war association with fascism” (Paramore 2016, 169), Maruyama’s examinations from after the war are most closely linked with his war-time essays. In “Theory and Psychology of Ultra-Nationalism” (1946 [1969a]), Maruyama built his powerful argumentation on a thesis that had clear

connections with his analysis of the Tokugawa period: he stated that the failure that led to the constellation of events of World War II was the “failure to draw any clear line of demarcation between the public and the private domains” of life (Maruyama 1969a, 6). This is a distinction that would have already been possible according to Maruyama’s interpretation as early as at the time of Ogyū Sorai and without any Western influences (Stevens 2018, 59–60). However, the public and the private spheres were not permanently separated, and despite the modernization of the Meiji era, it was nothing else but the *kokutai* that included “all the internal values of truth, morality, and beauty” (Maruyama 1969a, 6). This *kokutai* was embodied by the *tennō*, whose authority stemmed from his divine origin and was handed down from stage to stage in the state hierarchy, thus doing away with any kind of personal responsibility on any of these levels.

The essential point was that the final decision about the content of Japanese art, scholarship, and so forth, in other words, the definition of what was actually for the good of the country, was handed down by officials whose duty it was to give loyal service ‘to His Majesty the Emperor and the Imperial Government’. (Maruyama 1969a, 6, citation from the “Public Service Regulation for Officials”)

The role of the *tennō* was not merely symbolic, it was not simply ‘representing’ the unity of *kokutai*: the ruler himself literally *embodied* ‘absolute values’. This meant, at the same time, that no moral standards were applied when making judgements about individual actions (Maruyama 1969a, 8; see Stevens 2016, 161; 2018, 64). More precisely, there were no ‘individual’ actions since there were in fact no ‘individuals’ to commit such actions. Single entities were only elements of the whole, and their “position in society and in the nation was based less on social function than on *relative distance* [*kyori* 距離] *from the Emperor*” (Maruyama 1969a, 13, emphasis added as per original: MMS 2, 28).

The role of the family and its relationship with the nation is not discussed in the study on ultra-nationalism. Maruyama only talks about the imperial family, more precisely, about the imperial lineage, stressing that the fact that the *tennō* embodied ultimate values did not mean at all that he would have been ‘free’ in his actions:

Though the Emperor was regarded as the embodiment of ultimate value [*kyūkyokuteki kachi no jittai* 究極的価値の实体], he was infinitely removed from the possibility of creating values out of nothing. His Majesty was heir to the Imperial line unbroken for ages eternal and he ruled by virtue of the final injunctions of his ancestors. [...] Thus the Emperor too was saddled with a burden—in his case a tradition that derived

from the infinitely remote past. It was only because his existence was inextricably involved with the ancestral tradition, in such a way that he and his Imperial Ancestors formed a single unit, that he was regarded as being the ultimate embodiment of internal values. (Maruyama 1969a, 20; MMS 2, 34)

Beyond this web of dependencies related to the imperial lineage, Maruyama does not eliminate the relationship of family and nation in his study on ultra-nationalism. He does not speak more about the role of the imperial family in the Japanese state, nor does he deal with war-time propaganda stressing the family-nature of the nation. The family receives, however, far more importance in two papers Maruyama wrote somewhat later: in “The Ideology and Dynamics of Japanese Fascism” (*Nihon fashizumu no shisō to kōdō* 日本ファシズムの思想と行動, 1948 [1969b]) and “Nationalism in Japan” (*Nihon ni okeru nashonarizumu* 日本におけるナショナリズム, 1951 [1969c]).

In the study on Japanese fascism, Maruyama examined the unique characteristics of the phenomena he had already investigated in the study on ultra-nationalism “without having recourse to any abstract *a priori* definition” of the term ‘fascism’ (Maruyama 1969b, 25). As Mori stressed, “aside from how he called it”, Maruyama did not merge the Japanese phenomenon into European ones of similar kind, “on the contrary, he described them as something having characteristics contrastive to those of Nazism” (Mori 2020, 44). Before listing the main characteristics, Maruyama provides a periodization of Japanese fascism in three phases: a “preparatory period” (from 1919, the end of World War I to 1931, the Manchurian Incident); “period of maturity” (from 1931 to 1936, the *coup d’état* ‘February Incident’); “consummation period” (from 1936 to the end of the war in 1945) (Maruyama 1969b, 26–27). Regarding the first period, he talks, first, about early groups he calls “reactionary bodies rather than fascist organizations”. Of such groups he says that their platform had “*pure hōken* character” (*jun hōkenteki seikaku* 純封建的性格) (MMS 3, 264).

For example, the platform of the Great Japan National Essence Association states: ‘This association is a body sustained by the Heart and dedicated to chivalry.’ The Great Japan Political Justice Corps intones,

The master is like the parent; the follower is like the child. The comradeship of followers is like that of brothers in a family. The orders of the master must be obeyed through thick and thin. The brothers are to assist each other in mutual affection and must not forget the rules of courtesy. (Maruyama 1969b, 27–28; MMS 3, 264)

The link of these early quasi-fascist groups with the formation Maruyama described as *hōken* 封建 will become important for the present investigation. However, at this point Maruyama does not detail the role of Tokugawa *hōken* heritage in Japanese fascism, and turns his attention to those movements closer to the later formations he calls ‘fascist’. These movements end, as he stresses, with the 1936 February Incident that “determined that Japan’s course towards fascism would not take the shape of a fascist revolution” but remained in the framework of the “existing political structure that may be termed the strengthening of State control from above” (Maruyama 1969b, 33). This element returns at several points in the analysis as well as in the concluding statement: the fact that Japanese fascism was forced on the nation from above was due to the lack of a ‘bourgeois revolution’ similar to those seen in Europe (*ibid.*, 80). Thus, in the same way as Maruyama emphasized the internal tensions in the Meiji period that in some respects transcended but in some others preserved Tokugawa structures (Takó 2021, 359), he also pointed to tensions inherent in the ‘pre-modern’ features of Japanese ‘fascism’ (Conrad 1999, 166). These tensions are, of course, among the reasons why it is so difficult to compare the social formation and the power structure of 20th century Japan to Europe, where the various ‘fascist’ systems had foundations very different to those of Japanese ultra-nationalism as described by Maruyama (regarding the definition of fascism, see Kersten 1996, 139 ff; on related theories, see *ibid.*, 142 ff; on Maruyama’s standpoint, see *ibid.*, 150; for an early analysis, see Fletcher 1979, 39–40).

After the historical overview in the second part of the analysis, in Part III Maruyama discusses the ‘distinctive characteristics’ of fascism in Japan: the family-character of the state structure; agrarianism; and the Greater Asia Principle (*ajishugi* アジア主義) (see also Kersten 1996, 152). He mentions, first,

the family-system tendency [*kazokushugiteki keikō* 家族主義的傾向]: that is, the family system extolled as the foundation of the State structure. The basic characteristic of the Japanese State structure is that it is always considered as an extension of the family; more concretely, as a family-nation [*kazokukokka* 家族國家] composed of the Imperial House as the nation’s [*kokumin* 國民] ‘main family’ and [the people as] its ‘descendants’. This is not merely an analogy as in the organic theory of the State, but is considered as having a substantial meaning. It is maintained, not as an abstract idea but as an actual historical fact, that the Japanese nation preserves unaltered its ancient social structure based on blood relationship. (Maruyama 1969b, 36, translation altered—for the original, see MMS 3, 273; see also Mori 2020, 43)

Maruyama mentions that the emphasis on the family ideology and the virtues of loyalty and filiality (忠孝 *chūkō*) were not novelties at the time, and that they had stood at the centre of state ideology since the Meiji period (regarding *chūkō*, see Mustățea 2019). However, it is precisely the fact that this interpretation of the state remains the main idea of a “fascist movement that stresses the ‘national polity’ [*kokutai*] as a political slogan” that makes the *kazokukokka* principle a distinctive feature of ‘Japanese fascism’ compared to the German and Italian versions. As an example, Maruyama cites the following passage from the “The Present State of Japanese Fascism” (*Nihon fassho no gensei* 日本ファッショの現勢) by Tsuda Kōzō 津田光造 (1889–?), chief secretary of the Japan Village Government League (*Nihon Murajiba Dōmei* 日本村治派同盟):

In the family-system principle [*kazokushugi* 家族主義] of Japan the keynote of society is not the demand for individual rights [*kojin no kenri* 個人の権利], as in the modern countries of the West, but service to the family as a whole. Socially each family is an independent animate body, a complete cell in itself. The individual is no more than a part or an element of this complete cell. [...] Our nationalism [*kokkashugi* 国家主義] should be the extension and enlargement of this family-system principle. This is perhaps because our nationalism is nothing but the union of these families at the national level. The Emperor is the sovereign, family head, centre, and general representative of the State as a united body. (cited in Maruyama 1969b, 37, cited in Fraser’s translation—for the original, see MMS 3, 274)

This example also shows how, for Maruyama, the lack of individuality on all levels of society was a central characteristic of the “family-system principle”. In a system of legality—like the Western state as described by Maruyama in his study on ultra-nationalism (Maruyama 1969a, 3)—individual morality can be clearly separated from the formal place of the person in society. In a country, however, which is built on and is imagined through the family principle, moral obligations do not follow from individual considerations and decisions, but from the mere fact that one is a member of the family. In this case, one can see a peculiar kind of centralization by the interpretation of the state as *one* family—as opposed to the decentralized (*hōken*) structure that is based on *separate* family units.

At the same time, the second characteristic analysed by Maruyama, agrarianism, strengthens the decentralization of the operation of society.

On the one hand, there is a tendency towards an ever-greater strengthening of absolute State sovereignty focused on the Emperor; on the other, a tendency to centre the conception of Japan on provincial rather than on State affairs. (Maruyama 1969b, 38)

Thus, “the concentration of powerful authority and the strengthening of state control, which was common in world fascism, was limited in Japan by the ideology of agrarianism” (Maruyama 1969b, 44). This connects 20th century Japan with pre-Meiji times. Then, as a third element among the characteristics of Japanese fascism Maruyama mentions the imperialist idea of *ajiasbugi* rooted in the Meiji period; that is, “the idea that Japan should seize hegemony in Asia in place of European imperialism” (ibid., 51). These conflicting directions, as well as the lack of a mass movement and a bourgeois revolution, which are examined in the fourth part of his study, reflect internal tensions that penetrated imperialist Japan and were similar to the tensions Maruyama detected in the Tokugawa and Meiji periods.

Last but not least, and without discussing the entire analysis, it is important to mention Maruyama’s unfortunate distinction between ‘intellectuals’ and ‘pseudo-intellectuals’ (in Part V), the former said to be free from fascist influence, the latter described as its supporting social stratum (ibid., 57. ff; see also Fletcher 1979, 42). With this interpretation, as Kersten put it, “Maruyama did great harm to the credibility of his reading of Japanese fascism” (Kersten 1996, 152). It has several shortcomings, most importantly that it falsely suggests that there were no ‘true’ intellectuals supporting fascism, which was, of course, not the case (see Barshay 1992, 389; Kersten 1996, 152–53). It is also important, however, that Maruyama’s argument here was based on a consideration of the transmission of ideologies downwards within the peculiar social structure of the era.

It is precisely these pseudo-intellectuals who directly controlled the thought and sentiment of the ‘masses’. From the viewpoint of the Japanese political and social structure as a whole, they clearly belonged to the class of the ruled. Their standard of living was not very high, being scarcely different from that of their subordinates. Nevertheless, they were the undisputed rulers of their own microcosms, in which they had the authority of petty emperors. (Maruyama 1969b, 60)

This description, however one-sided, shows a close relationship with the way Maruyama described the “transfer of oppression” (Maruyama 1969a, 17–18; see Sasaki 2012, 44) in the study on ultra-nationalism. At the same time, it is also linked with the characteristics of the family-system tendency as well as with the decentralization implied by agrarianism. All these features point back in the di-

rection of features Maruyama stressed when discussing Tokugawa *hōkensei* 封建性 (see the previous section). This relationship becomes explicit in his 1951 study “Nationalism in Japan”.

In “Nationalism in Japan” Maruyama examines the uniqueness of Japanese nationalism, pointing to the “confusion that still surrounds the country’s position in world history” (Maruyama 1969c, 135). He leaves no doubt about what is at stake in the interpretation of these characteristics:

There can be no complete break [*danzetsu* 断絶] in history. Japan’s future nationalism, whether it emerges as a reaction against the past, as a compromise with its heritage, or as a revival of the pre-war form, cannot escape being branded by its own past. (Maruyama 1969c, 137; MMS 5, 59)

This point is crucial considering Maruyama’s distinction between ‘ultra-nationalism’, the object of his strongest critique, and ‘modern nationalism’, which he held to be not only desirable, but a requirement for a modern nation (on Maruyama’s distinction of *kokuminshugi* 国民主義 and *kokkashugi* as ‘healthy’ and ‘unhealthy’ nationalism, see Kersten 1996, 149; on Fukuzawa as a representative of ‘modern nationalism’, see Sasaki 2012, 31, 35. ff). For Maruyama, Japan should have become a modern nation-state, but it stepped onto an extreme nationalist path instead, a path that still endangered the nationalism that remained a requirement as long as the country wanted to form a unity similar to Western nations. To understand the factors that were shaping the previous period is, thus, an essential instrument in shaping the present. Harootunian referred to Maruyama as an example of “anxiety” and an “unwavering belief in the need for constant vigil against recurrence” of pre-war nationalism (Harootunian 1971, 58). However, based on Maruyama’s constant warning against presupposing *any* ‘turning points’ or ‘breaks’ in history, it might be fairer to say that the foundation of his analyses was a view of historical progression that did indeed include the possibility of recurrence or, more precisely, *excluded* the possibility of a ‘complete break’ in history. The same view can certainly be the source of the ‘anxiety’ mentioned by Harootunian.

Japan, as Maruyama saw it, followed a path of nationalism that was different from that of all other countries in Asia. One of the main reasons for this uniqueness was that “[i]n Japan the powers that overthrew the Tokugawa regime and seized authority in a unified nation were themselves constituent elements of the old ruling class” (Maruyama 1969c, 142). Because of this, a seemingly successful modernization was carried out without the emergence of the modern citizen, “popular movements being repressed in the name of national unity” (*ibid.*, 143). In Maruyama’s understanding,

from the beginning tension existed between external and internal impulses, in the form of National Sovereignty towards the Western nations, and Popular Sovereignty towards the government itself. For Maruyama it was particularly crucial that instead of coexisting as dual facets of a subjective identity, these two impulses were regarded as incongruous, even antithetical. It was not possible to defend the nation and be democratic at the same time. In other words, the subject greeted the modern era as a divided self, a dichotomous subjectivity in hostile cohabitation within the state and the citizen. (Kersten 1996, 63–64)

This internal tension caused by the fact that nationalism developed without democracy concluded in two central tendencies:

first, the tendency to symbolize the State as the *direct extension* [*chokusetsuteki enchō* 直接的延長] of the primary group (family or village [*kazoku ya buraku* 家族や部落]) in which the individual is submerged; secondly, love of fatherland, expressed pre-eminently as love of one's native place which in turn is an aspect of *love of the environment*. (Maruyama 1969c, 144, emphasis added as per original MMS 5, 67)

The three features of Japanese ultra-nationalism; that is, 1. Tokugawa *hōken* structures hidden behind the modernized surface of (post-)Meiji Japan, 2. the lack of individuality and citizenship, and 3. the family-nature of the state are most explicitly linked with each other in this aspect.

With the democratic front silenced, the Meiji leaders zealously injected national consciousness by a full-scale mobilization of irrational attachments to the primary group. Above all, this meant that traditional loyalty of the *hōken* system and devotion to the father as family-head [*dentōteki hōkenteki oyobi shikafuchōteki chūsei* 伝統的封建的及至家父長の忠誠] were centralized in the Emperor, the concrete manifestation of Japan's national unity. (Maruyama 1969c, 145, translation slightly altered: see MMS 5, 68; see also Barshay 1992, 386–87; Sasaki 2012, 32)

This loyalty was the characteristic that, for Maruyama, symbolized wartime propaganda, and one that he linked to the (mis)use of the family model as both the foundation and the symbol of the nation-state.

Conclusion

With his observations on the role of the concept of family in Japanese ultra-nationalism, Maruyama stressed his central thesis that pre-war ultra-nationalism was not a sudden phenomenon but the consequence of a process that leads back to the Meiji transition, the period usually labelled the most liberal and democratic era in Japanese history. For Maruyama, it was not the ultra-nationalism of the 1930s that destroyed responsibility: it was the Meiji era that failed to “produce *ci-toyens* able to bear the burden of political responsibility in a modern nation-state” (Maruyama 1969c, 146). In the present paper I have shown that the family-nature of the ultra-nationalist state meant for him the appearance of what he called the *hōkenteki* 封建的 structure of society. The most important element of this, as I argued, was neither the land (*feudum*), nor the service of subordinates provided to their lords as it is suggested by the broadly applied term ‘feudalism’. For Maruyama, *hōken* essentially meant *decentralized* authority and a system in which the conservation of oppression-relationships is guaranteed by filial loyalty. This does not mean that local authorities would not be part of the same hierarchy. It means that the control that keeps this hierarchy together is *not* the direct control of one centre of power but many ‘family heads’ who have the filial loyalty of their people and are loyal, in the same way, to their superiors. As Maruyama wrote in the study on ‘ultra-nationalism’:

In the absence of any free, subjective awareness the individual’s actions are not circumscribed by the dictates of conscience; instead he is regulated by the existence of people in a higher class—of people, that is, who are closer to the ultimate value. What takes the place of despotism in such a situation is a phenomenon that may be described as the maintenance of equilibrium by the transfer of oppression. By exercising arbitrary power on those who are below, people manage to transfer in a downward direction the sense of oppression that comes from above, thus preserving the balance of the whole. (Maruyama 1969a, 17–18)

This is what Maruyama saw symbolically represented in the family-state ideology:

One of the major characteristics of *hōken* society [*hōkenschakai* 封建社会] is the preservation of the ordered unity of the total structure by linking together in layers closed, self-contained social spheres (centered on the master-servant and father-son relationships). Politically, this takes the form of the *principle of indirect control*. (Maruyama 1974, 243; MMS 2, 54)

This relationship between master and servant, father and son and, in a later stage, the *tennō* and all Japanese, was described by Maruyama in the concept of the family.

Maruyama never criticized the importance of the family as such. It was not the family but a certain glorification or mystification of family relationships that he saw as the root of a dangerous misinterpretation of social relations. That misinterpretation was expanded to a theory of the state in the concept of *kokutai*, becoming the source of an irrational form of modernity that included modern institutions but lacked the concept of a free individual. From among the different aspects of the nature of the ultra-nationalist state, Maruyama was mainly interested in the ‘psychological’ background of the operation of society. As he concluded in “Nationalism in Japan”:

In order to unite nationalism and democracy effectively, an internal reform in the psychological structure of Japanese society must occur. For Japan to accomplish this union, nationalism must be rationalized in the same degree that democracy is irrationalized. (Maruyama 1969c, 152)

This would only be possible by founding the nation on free, responsible individuals instead of a misinterpreted concept of the family. The present investigation focused on the nature of this concept as Maruyama saw it. As I pointed out, it was rooted in classical Confucianism, it became (in Maruyama’s interpretation) a central element of Tokugawa rule, it did not disappear with the ‘modernization’ of the Meiji period, and it symbolically represented national unity in the pre-war era. This concept was for Maruyama further proof that “[t]here can be no complete break in history” (Maruyama 1969c, 137)—at the same time, a central element of his arguments urging change.

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