

---

# ZAN Tao × HANEDA Masashi

[曾涛 × 羽田正 January 21, 2020]

# Contents

Preface	NAKAJIMA Takahiro (Director of the East Asian Academy for New Liberal Arts)	1
Dialogue	ZAN Tao × HANEDA Masashi	2
Afterword		29
	Some Thoughts after the Dialogue with Professor Haneda (ZAN Tao)	29
	Historians' Dialogue in the Pandemic Era (HANEDA Masashi)	31
	About ZAN Tao and HANEDA Masashi	35

# 序

中島隆博（東アジア藝文書院院長）

2019年に発足した東アジア藝文書院は、東アジア教養学という来るべき学問のために、その成果を積極的に刊行していこうと考えています。ここにお届けするのは、EAA ダイアログと銘打ったシリーズです。

ダイアログとはプラトンに由来する概念で、dia-logos すなわち「ロゴスを通じて」という古い意味を有しています。そして、その「ロゴス」には、言葉や論理に加えて、万物の根源や批判的な切断という複数の意味が重層的に交差しています。東アジアの概念に翻訳をするならば、おそらく「道」や「文」ということになるでしょう。「道」は語ることであり根源でありますし、「文」もまた言葉であり切り分けられたパターンであるからです。重要なことは、ダイアログは誰かとともに対話を行い、お互いにロゴスを吟味しあって、新しい地平を開こうとすることだと思えます。

EAA ダイアログは、東アジア藝文書院に集っていただいた方々との対話から生まれています。読者のみなさまには、そこに込められた学問への思いや望みを受け止めていただければ幸いです。何ができるかだけでなく、何を欲するのかが、来るべき学問にとってはどうしても必要なことだからです。

現在の covid-19 のパンデミックがあぶり出したのは、「既知」の諸問題でした。それらはすでにわかっていたにもかかわらず、様々な理由から「できない」とされてきたものです。来るべき学問は、そうした「既知」の枠組みを乗り越えるために、真に「未知」なるものに触れる責任があると思えます。

EAA ダイアログを通じて、ともに「未知」なるものを思考したいと思います。

## ZAN Tao × HANEDA Masashi

[答涛 × 羽田正 January 21, 2020]

---

### World History in Chinese and Japanese Contexts

**Haneda** Welcome. Thank you very much for coming to Tokyo. It is a great pleasure for me to exchange ideas about the study of history. I have already heard a lot about the situation of the study and research on history in China, particularly the meaning of research on global world history in China. But I want to ask you the same question: what is the meaning of world history and global history in Chinese? In my opinion, there is some difference in the understanding of the concept between Chinese and Japanese, and also, of course, between English and Chinese or English and Japanese. What do you think about that?

**Zan** Right. Concerning world history, you know, in the most of the history departments in Chinese universities, we find that they have two main sections. One is called the *Zhongguo lishi* (中国历史).

**Haneda** Which literally means Chinese history.

**Zan** And the other one is *Shijie lishi* (世界历史). If we translate this into English it would be “world history” but that “world” is different. In this sense, it is a world, you know, a structure from which

the Chinese are actually excluded, right? So “world” in this context means “foreign.”

**Haneda** Yes, that’s right.

**Zan** So, I feel a little bit embarrassed to talk about world history or *Shijie lishi* (世界历史) in the older Chinese sense, because gradually it is gaining a new momentum in the Chinese academic study of history, with the rising influence of global history. I think the definition of world history has changed from a “foreign history” to a real “world history.” It is very much equated with world history and global history literally, in the sense that they are referring to history of the earth and the whole world.

**Haneda** The meaning of *Quanqiu lishi* (全球历史), global history, is in a sense a history of the globe in Chinese, am I right?

**Zan** Yes, literally it is, so some people think it is impossible to work on that history. They are doubting: how could you study the history of the globe? Is there such a thing as a global history? Some other local Chinese academics have instead proposed a counterpart to this global history, that is transnational history, *Kuaguo lishi* (跨国历史) in Chinese, or international history (国际史). International history in this context is actually equivalent with global history. In particular, two dimensions for global history are emphasized by these scholars. The first dimension concerns the notion of a “network.”

**Haneda** Connective history.

**Zan** Connectedness in this sense. The other [i.e., the second one] is comparative studies. But for me, there is something else, which is

from Karl Marx.

**Haneda** Not from Hegel?

**Zan** I think it's from the same intellectual background. It has been argued that world history only appears with the development of capitalism. After that, it is possible to talk about a real "world history." This is an idea at least from Karl Marx. So if you read the prefaces of some Chinese textbooks on world history, you can find this, but for students who pursue world history, it still means you are working on the history of the areas outside of China.

**Haneda** Okay, I am sure that now there is a slight difference between the meaning of so called world history *Shijie lishi* (世界历史) in Chinese and *Sekai rekishi* (世界歴史) in Japanese. In China, *Shijie lishi* (世界历史) means that it excludes China from the framework. In Japan, on the contrary, although Japan was originally excluded from that framework, after the Second World War, at least from around the 1960s, people started to realize how important it is to integrate Japanese history into world history and started to discuss everything concerning world history including Japanese history.

**Zan** Unfortunately, in China the impact of the Marxist approach to world history has been more ideological and paradigmatic than structural.

**Haneda** But at the same time, I have to say that we still keep and maintain the framework of Japanese history apart from that of world history. So, it might be said that on one hand we have Japanese history as a national history, while on the other hand we have another story of Japanese history in the context of world history. In

this regard, I have to say there is a bit of a difference between the Japanese past in world history and Japanese national history. As we deal with this slight difference of the interpretation of the Japanese past in world history and in Japanese national history, it is very important for us to think about the negative meaning of the term “world history.”

The concept of world history is very neutral, such that many of us just regard it as a history of all the countries in the world, including Japan. But at the same time, some historians are not satisfied with that concept of world history, which puts all the national histories together and binds them into one. However, I think we need to transform the way of understanding the past into a new form. This is what I have proposed for more than ten years. To realize this aim, I have tried to create a new framework of world history, which I call new world history. In Japan, people believe that global history is a kind of new world history, but I'd like to say that these are not the same.

And the interesting point is that in English, sometimes world history and global history have the same meaning. Especially in the US, the term “world history” reminds them of the negative aspects of “world history” in the German tradition. So, in place of using the term “world history” they introduced “global history.” In my opinion, global history is just an approach. It sometimes indicates a new way of researching the past, just like connected history, comparative history, and so on. It doesn't propose a new vision. Japanese scholars also think that a new world history is almost equivalent to global history.

But still for me, global history is just an approach, while a new world history is a new vision. But I'm not quite sure that other historians agree with my idea.

**Zan** Luckily, I published an article to some extent concerned with

this, just last year. There is an introductory section in this paper, in which I also proposed my understanding of global history. Yes, as you just mentioned, I propose and use “global history” as an approach. For some years, other Chinese professors and I have been working on a project for a textbook on a modern history of the world. We have been given the task of



covering the time span ranging from around 1500 to 1900. That is 400 years. But the most difficult part of our project might be related to how China is included in our textbook. How do we write China in this world history? It would be quite difficult to get the approval of experts on *Zhongguo lishi*, Chinese national history from Ming Dynasty to Qing Dynasty. There are always debates. One of the reasons, I guess, is that our way of simplification is different from the traditional way of writing Chinese national history. Another way might be ideological. To write this textbook, we have to include China, after all, because this is a “world history.” There were also some who suggested that we could exclude China from this textbook, but this is actually unacceptable. That is a dilemma. This has been a very important personal experience of thinking about world history.

A second experience is related to my reevaluation of the official paradigm of history writing in China. The Marxist approach to the interpretation of Chinese history has been very important since at least the 1930s. At that time, we already had our first generation of Marxist historians like Guo Moruo. Actually, the 1930s generation of Chinese leftist historians were very consciously trying to use



the Marxist approach to give new interpretations of Chinese history. This could not be regarded solely as a national history anymore, because the work they had done was to situate Chinese history in a standard periodization of world history made by the classic writers.

Later, the Stalinist periodization of human history into five stages (primitive society, society that exploits slaves, feudal society, capitalist society and socialist society) became an infallible law in the People's Republic of China. This is not a standard national history either. Rather, this also could be regarded as the first attempt to put China into a global perspective, although it is a very ideologically-driven perception. In most nations, it is common that the writing of official history is involved with a certain kind of ideology. The Chinese approach is, I would say, both national and global. This is the way I would prefer in understanding the Marxist approach to the interpretation of our history.

But now I would like to argue that diversified paradigms have been applied to interpret Chinese history and world history in China, while the Marxist paradigm still prevails. In particular, with a number of translated works — mostly from English —, students who are interested in history can read many different interpretations. I think you know, for example, the project which is funded by Bill Gates. It's "The Big History" project.

It's a very interesting way of teaching, especially insofar as they are focusing on high school students as the intended audience. They have gathered many different experts from different fields to



work on such a big history project, to look at history not just during the 400 or 500 years that I mentioned, but spanning tens of thousands or maybe a million years. It is also, I think, symbolic of how the interpretation of history could be changed, or how it has been diversified in China already.

At present, I agree with you on the point that global history is an approach. I think most people are converging on your understanding. I mean, as far as global history is concerned, and that certainly most historians cannot deal with the globe. It might be, as in the case of the big history project, a good way of teaching. As an approach to research, with very familiar old materials, it could lead you to find something new. The desire of the young students to grasp as much information as possible is understandable. So, a comprehensive book dealing with the whole world is attractive, although it's very challenging. When I was a student, one of the best-sellers in China was Stavrianos's book, *A Global History*. It seems to be a global history, right?

**Haneda** Yes, translation.

**Zan** Actually, it's an old book, but reprinted many times in China up to now. For students of my generation, we used to like this style.

**Haneda** It was published at the beginning of the 1990s, I think.

**Zan** Right. For the Chinese students, we find this book is interesting for us. Apparently, it is much easier to find more good books dealing with the history of China.

**Haneda** But in terms of the approach of global history, one of the main ways is to cross the boundary or border of one nation. At this point, we have some difficulty both in China and Japan, and even

in Korea. This is because, compared with European countries, I would argue, the people of East Asian countries have a much stronger sense of identity in relation to their particular nation, and they need their own history. In case of European countries, by contrast, in addition to each nation's history, they have at least a shared European history, which should be shared by so-called European people. I am not quite sure if they have their own unique European history among themselves. There are many conflicts or differences of views among all these European peoples, but at least they have their own shared view and identity of being European as well as French, German, or Italian, etc.

But in case of East Asia, the peoples of China, Japan, and Korea — they believe that they have been very independent for long, long time, for more than 2000 years. Although there are many connected histories in the past between different parts of East Asia, in a sense they don't want to break the wall or border that separates them, even in the past. For example, in the case of Japanese historians, I would like to describe the views of one of my friends, working in the field of Japanese history. His name is Professor MURAI Shosuke. He is a very famous historian of medieval Japan. And he tried to explain, for example, the story of *wokou* (倭寇) — pirates. He tried to explain that especially in the last years of the *wokou*, in the sixteenth century, their group included many so-called people from Japan or Japanese archipelago, from Korea or even from Mainland China, and they formed a kind of mixed ethnic group. In those days, people called them *wokou*. *Wo* (倭) means Japan, but in fact the *wokou* were a mixture of people.

That is his opinion, but in Korea, for example, they never accept this kind of view. I say this to Korean researchers, as I have many friends in Korea, and Murai-san does as well. He has very good friends with whom he's discussed the composition of the *wokou*, and even if Professor Murai tries to persuade them that

group is a mixture of people, they never accept his idea. So, it means Korean researchers believe that there was a clear distinction between Japanese and Koreans in those days, though I am not quite sure if they had their own nationality in those days.

**Zan** People pretend that they did.

**Haneda** No need, because these groups attacked many coastal peoples in mainland China, and the government of the Ming dynasty called them *wokou*, because they were certainly an enemy of the Chinese government. In a sense, it was practical for the Ming government to call them foreigners coming from the outside and attacking people on the coast. Of course, the majority of *wokou* could have been Japanese, the people from mainland Japan, but as Murai discusses, people from other areas could have been included as well. So, I wonder why people still maintain a strict sense of national history or identity, such as that of Japan, Korea and China, even when they consider the medieval era.

**Zan** Very good question, actually.

**Haneda** Yes, but that is just one example. In any case, if we view the Eastern part of Eurasia from the sky, there maybe was no clear distinction between these three countries. Of course, politically speaking, they each have their own particular governments, but culturally or economically speaking, we don't need to cut or demarcate this sphere into three and construct each nation's history. But compared with the Europeans' situation, I think the circumstances in this part of the study of history seem very different.

**Zan** This comparative perspective from your side is very important. But, the first thing we have to explain is the rise of a sense of being

European or the European identity, which is in fact very closely related to the history of Islamic civilization and especially of the Ottoman Empire. Without such a great enemy, it is very hard to imagine the possibility of a strong European identity. For example, in the writings of Martin Luther, Turks were treated very seriously. And one of the very early victories by the European side was on the Lepanto battle of 1571. In that battle, the Europeans fought together against the Ottoman Turks — and they won. Europeans had an ‘other’ which was the Muslims or Turks.

**Haneda** Yes, that’s right.

**Zan** But from this perspective, for East Asia, we have to go back at least to the tributary system. Last month, I also wrote a review of an old book by a Sinologist from the United States. The book is *Cherishing Men from Afar* (1995) by Professor James Hevia. He made a very postmodernist interpretation of the Kotou issue in the meeting between the English envoy George Macartney and Emperor Qianlong. When I read his book, something occurred to me. I think most historians agree that there used to be a certain form of tributary system, and although this cannot explain everything, it is something that existed from a very ancient time to the early modern period. But, I think for the maintenance of the tributary system, the sole center should be strong enough. And for people in East Asia such as the people of Vietnam, Southeast Asia, Korea, and Japan, the Central Kingdom was both a universal civilization and the “other.” The Central Kingdom could be regarded as an internal “other.” But the Ottoman Turks were different for the Europeans. So the structure was different here.

Today, the Ottoman Empire is gone. It is the Europeans who finally destroyed this “other.” In the East Asian experience, it is a different story. We have entered the Westphalian inter-national

system. But ideological divergences were strengthened in the twentieth century and consequently some parts of the historical structure continue. So, I think that it is hard to politically imagine a common identity in East Asia.

**Haneda** But in the case of the Europe against the Ottoman Empire, they regarded the Ottomans as the other because of the differences of religion, language, etc. But in case of East Asia, at least in pre-modern times, many people surrounding China believed that China was, in a sense, a part of the world or they belonged to the same sphere ruled by the Chinese Emperor even though there have been many small countries, Korea, Japan, Vietnam, etc. Of course, they were independent, but at the same time they shared a lot of same culture.

**Zan** Yes, generally speaking, it used to be like that. Recently, I read an article by Prof. Ge Zhaoguang, published maybe last April, in which he mentioned the 80th birthday celebration of Emperor Qianlong. According to Ge, this was the last and biggest event in the tributary system in East Asia.

**Haneda** Yes, that's right.

**Zan** At least, what he found is that — and I think you may know this already — , if we compare the Chinese official records with those of the surrounding small countries, we get a very different impression of this big event. We can find very complicated, even negative evaluations of Qing China.

**Haneda** Yes, of course but at the same time, I have to say that they couldn't escape from the influence of China, even if they pretend to be independent, because, you know, people in Japan used Chi-

nese characters and texts to communicate with each other for a long time. There has been a huge influence from Chinese civilization certainly. In this respect, we need to understand or try to understand the past of the eastern part of Eurasia in a more connected way, or in a way that takes greater account of the whole region.

**Zan** Yes, I agree. It is not difficult to reconstruct such a connected history since we had lots of relevant materials.

**Haneda** I am not sure if I have already given you this. Do you have this book *The Creation of the Notion of “Islamic World”*?

**Zan** Yes, I have it.

**Haneda** This is the translation of my book into Chinese, on the concept of the Islamic world. I am not quite sure if we can discuss this issue here — but there was a problem in those days with censorship.

**Zan** Yes, I think the topic is somewhat sensitive.

**Haneda** Yes, because you know that the concept of the Islamic world means that it contains not only the Middle East but also a part of China, because Muslims also live there. “Islamic world” means the sphere in which Muslims live. If this is a book which tries to promote this kind of concept, it would be very dangerous for the Chinese government. (laughter) At that time, Professor Ge Zhaoguang worried about the publication of this book, and they negotiated with each other, and finally they decided to explain that this is a sort of *gainian* (概念) I.e., a concept, the formation of the concept of “the Islamic world.” In other words, it is just a history of thought, not ...

**Zan** ... not a part of the world itself.

**Haneda** Yes. And in the end, he was successful in publishing this book.

**Zan** From which publisher? Shanghai?

**Haneda** Shanghai, and it was published in 2011, I think. There was not very strong censorship in those days, but in any case this shows us that even today, the Chinese government or Chinese authorities want to maintain a clear border around China, and in this respect they need their own history, the history of their country without mentioning it as “the Islamic world.”

**Zan** But I did not think about it from this angle.

**Haneda** What are your thoughts about this without mentioning it? For example, the existence of the Islamic world? I know that high school textbooks in China simply teach the history of the Arab people or the Arab world, but not the Islamic world. On the contrary, here in Japan, we have taught for long years the history of the Islamic world, the so-called Islamic world. I am rather against this idea.

**Zan** I know you are against this idea.

**Haneda** But anyway, it is quite different.

**Zan** Right, but I don't think it is because of a certain [Chinese] authority's clear concept of a border. From another perspective, perhaps it might be very practical, like what we call anti-terrorism. That is another, you know, another explanation given by authori-



ties.

**Haneda** Yes, of course.

**Zan** Or the sensitive issues involved.

**Haneda** Yes, but it is not. The idea that Muslims are terrorists is very erroneous.

**Zan** Right. I do not mean that anti-terrorism equates anti-Muslims. It is completely wrong to associate terrorism with any certain group of people or religion. That is the worst thing that modern media has created.

### Toward “Becoming a Historian”

**Haneda** Yes, that’s right. It seems that somehow the topic and the reasons why you started to learn or study the history of the Ottoman Empire, were because it is quite exceptional in China. What motivated you?

**Zan** Very personal, actually. I didn’t have any expectations in the beginning. Actually, I didn’t work on the Ottoman Empire from the early period of my career. As an undergraduate student, I started to become interested in Turkish history, quite accidentally, around 2000–2001. But, you know even today I am one of the few Chinese historians working in this field. Compared with the situation in Japan, we had very few historians in the field of Middle East studies. I am from Shandong Province, and I am not a Muslim. My family has no Muslim background either. Rather, it was from one of the professors in the History Department I got a paper topic without any further information. This was Professor Dong

Zhenghua. The topic was Turkey’s history of military coups. While I was working on my master’s degree, with Professor Dong, I learned that there used to be a generation of Chinese intellectuals in the 1920s–1930s who were more interested in the history of Turkey and the Ottoman Empire, mainly because of the then-contemporary issues in China. Since there were, you know, the two “sick men” of East and West Asia, Chinese people tried to look at ourselves from a comparative perspective.

Professor Dong’s own advisor had been educated during the 1920s–1930s — I’m kind of an academic grandson. It is normal that he had such a perception. During his master’s study, Professor Dong researched the Kemalist Reforms from the perspective of modernization. This was natural, for modernization became a very important theme for scholars in China during the 1980s. Modernization was studied in a comparative manner, with the first comparative object being Japan. There were some books translated from Japanese into Chinese, and also some scholars studying the experience of the Meiji restoration, and how Japan succeeded in modernization. Then, scholars were also interested in the Turkish case, as, for example, my advisor. But Prof. Dong’s doctoral research interests shifted from Turkey to other issues. While I was doing my research under his supervision, I got to know about all the stories as part of the intellectual history of modern China. After I decided to continue to do my PhD, I knew that studying Turkish language would be important. But at the beginning, then, I could not learn Turkish because there was no such major or a training program at PKU.

**Haneda** How did you learn it?

**Zan** Luckily, I met a visiting Turkish scholar from the Middle East Technical University, a historian named Isenbike Togan, who visit-

ed PKU for one month.

**Haneda** I know. She is very famous.

**Zan** After learning Turkish for over 20 hours with her, I became mainly a self-taught student of Turkish. Since I had studied Japanese for two years, it was possible. Actually, I found that I could understand Turkish grammar quite easily. Also, modern Turkish is Latinized. It uses the Roman alphabet, so it is easier to learn. Isenbike started training me personally, first with my speaking, listening to Turkish for about one month. She is a very experienced teacher of the language. I am very lucky to have met Professor Togan.

In 2004, I got some funding from the Netherlands. And with this support, from 2005 to 2006, I studied at the Middle East Technical University, but in fact only for six months. These six months were very efficient to me. All the professors in the history department of METU helped me a lot. Luckily, the Middle East Technical University also offers language instruction in English, and I could communicate with everyone very easily at that time. I could practice Turkish, and with the help of Professor Togan, I could easily use the library of the Turkish History Society. People around me would tell me that it was their first time to meet a Chinese student working on the history of modern Turkey. Maybe that was one of the reasons that they were happy to help with many things. They would send me books, photocopies, clues of archival materials, almost everything. It was a very effective six months for me.

Today, I still use the materials I collected during those days. At present, I've tried to shift a bit, to look at the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century, because I think it is very important to compare, you know, not the period of the Republic, but the period

of transformation from the Empire to the national state, which is a fascinating topic. Two-and-a-half years ago, I started my training on the Ottoman language. We do not have this kind of program at PKU either. Luckily, I met another Turkish philologist from Indiana University, an expert on the Ottoman philology. I invited him to Institute for Humanities and Social Sciences at PKU.

**Haneda** Yes, I visited there for the first time.

**Zan** Right, he was there. During his two-month stay, I requested that he taught us Ottoman Turkish language, in an intensive course. It is a very very good experience for me, and especially for two of my students.

**Haneda** So you have two students who are interested in Ottoman history or Turkish history?

**Zan** Three, now. One is doing his doctorate, and started last year at Princeton University in the Near Eastern Department with Professor Sukru Hanioglu. Another student who started a master's degree, now at Georgetown University, is interested in the early Ottoman Empire. She started to learn Greek and Turkish in the first year as an undergraduate at PKU. It's rather exceptional, actually. Another student, who graduated from literature, worked on Dede Korkut. She also attended the seminar of Ottoman Turkish. Actually, I have more students on Turkish Republic, and all of them are learning Turkish.

**Haneda** Is Peking University the only institution at which Chinese students study Ottoman history?

**Zan** I believe there are others in Shanghai and Shaanxi. Still, I think

we face the same situation in lacking a systematic language training program. Fortunately, I have another student, not a student from PKU. He is an expert in Uygur language. He got his PhD from Minzu University, then he got a teaching position in Beijing. I send some of my students to his language class now. At least they could be trained there in grammar. In this way, my students could also get at least one or two semesters training there. We are witnessing the rising of Turkish Studies in China now. I hope it will become better and better. In the past, it would not be possible.

**Haneda** So, you are the grandfather.

**Zan** In some sense maybe. But I am still very young. (laughter)

**Haneda** Let me tell you some of my experiences with the study of history, which are just like your case. I got my PhD on Iranian history in Paris — pre-modern Iranian history, looking at the political history of institutions. I now realize, though, that in those days I did a kind of philological study. I read many manuscripts, texts written in Persian, and tried to reconstruct the governmental and military systems, etc., in the sixteenth century. I looked at Safavid Dynasty and what followed. I published the doctoral thesis in French, and it became, in a sense, kind of a canonical text in Safavid history. The book title is *Le système militaire safavide. Le šāh et les qizibāš* (Berlin, 1987). That was great, but after I did my research in Kyoto and in Paris, I moved to Tokyo here at this institute (Institute for Advanced Studies on Asia) thirty years ago, I realized that the atmosphere of this institute is quite different. Of course, philological study is a very important part of this institute, but there are many researchers conducting field research as well as some other social scientists, and I needed to communicate with them. At that point, I had no words at all. I was just like a student of

philological study. I could communicate with my colleagues in terms of how to read this or that Persian text, etc., but that was all. In those days I was involved in a large research group with the title of Urbanism in Islam.

The leader of that group was a professor of this institute, and he requested me to join the big project. It followed a kind of area studies approach. Before coming to Tokyo, I once visited Iran, but that was all. It was no longer possible to visit Iran, because of the Iranian Revolution and then the Iran-Iraq war. Later, I was able to visit Iran and the Middle East, including Turkey, Egypt, etc. for the second time. Following that, I was fascinated with a kind of field research. It is very interesting for me to visit my own research field, and I was very happy to visit all these Middle Eastern countries. I studied a lot about buildings and Islamic architecture, and when I came back to Japan, I tried to explain how beautiful, how wonderful all these works of Islamic architecture were. Muslim people are not what the Japanese usually imagine. They are very gentle, generous, and kind, and furthermore they are very intelligent. They are certainly a wonderful people and quite different from what Japanese people generally think. In that sense, I was a missionary. (laughter)

**Zan** Of Middle Eastern people.

**Haneda** Yes, and I express myself like this to students and the general public as well. At that point, of course, I didn't realize that I was a kind of missionary, but at the same time I firmly believed that this was the way I had to work on as a researcher of the Middle East. It was successful, in a sense, because there were some students who became interested in the beauty of Islamic architecture, and they wanted to learn with me. But then everything just failed after September 11, 2001. At that moment, there were many criticisms

against Islam, Muslims, etc. And just as I told you earlier, the idea began spreading that all Muslims are very dangerous and they are all terrorists, etc. These kinds of narratives were expanding all over the world, including Japan.

I tried to speak out against this kind of criticism, but it was in vain at that moment. As for why people think like this, I thought they regarded Muslims as different — Muslims as others — and that's why they discriminated against Muslims. That was the original point of my research on this book. In the end, I concluded that the concept of the Islamic World is itself very dangerous. It was created in nineteenth-century Europe to discriminate against others or to constitute themselves as European, just as you described earlier. Simultaneously, during the period of my, in a sense, missionary activity, I actively took part in the group of international researchers concerned with Safavid studies. There is an international group, a roundtable on Safavid studies, amongst researchers working in the field of Safavid history. I was invited to present a paper, but almost all the participants of this roundtable were from outside of Iran. There were a small number of Iranian participants who could speak in English, but other Iranian national researchers remained outside of that circle. They had a different approach, and conducted a different kind of research in Iran. Wherever I visited Iran they asked me — not only these historians, but also people in general — , “Why are you studying Iranian history?” Of course, I think they were very happy to find a Japanese researcher who is interested in Iranian history.

Not to mention they were very welcoming in the beginning, but as soon as I started to tell them what I found and what I had discovered in terms of their past, they were against me because, you know, my interpretation was not their way of understanding national history, which is quite different. Many of them would tell me, “Oh, you are doing this your own way, but this is our national

history.” At that moment, due to the fact that I belonged to the international research group, they accepted me and my viewpoint there. From this experience, I asked myself: “Why am I studying history of Iran? For whom I am now writing history of Iran?” In addition, after September 11, I realized that I was again a kind of missionary to Japanese people, telling them about the goodness of Iranian or Muslim people, the beauty of Islamic culture, Islamic architecture, etc. Through these accumulated efforts as well as countless moments of self-questioning, I came to the conclusion that I completely changed the terms of my research topic with regards to the way we try to understand the world, such as without using the term “the Islamic World” or without cutting the globe into several parts, considering how similar all these people in the world are. At present, then, I am interested in how the same thing happens in terms of Japanese history. There are a sizable number of historians outside of Japan who are working on Japanese history, in English, in French, or in other languages. Of course, there are many Japanese historians who are working in the field of Japanese history in Japanese. Astonishingly, there are very few connections between these two groups.

**Zan** But there are some translations from the other languages into Japanese.

**Haneda** Yes certainly, there are some translations, but not many.

**Zan** But the situation in China is a bit different. We have people and institutions working on translations of many books from other languages mainly into English. These translated works were sorted out as a special collection of the Overseas Sinologists Series.

**Haneda** Yes, but, you know, on that topic my book on the East India



Company was just published in China last month; originally it was in a whole series of twenty-one volumes of world history, a history of the world. Out of twenty-one volumes, only nine were accepted by the Chinese authorities to be translated. Fortunately, my book was among them.

**Zan** The East India Company is not sensitive at all.

**Haneda** Of the many books, there are two to three on Modern China.

**Zan** The book on the Ottoman Empire was also accepted. I wrote an introduction.

**Haneda** Yes, the author of that book is one of my good, close friends, HAYASHI Kayoko. She is now the president of Tokyo University of Foreign Studies. And I visited a number of Middle Eastern countries with her.

**Zan** I do not know her personally, but I think her book is very good and the viewpoint is very comprehensively updated. In addition, I saw an announcement by Professor SUZUKI Tadashi.

**Haneda** I would like to introduce him to you. One problem is that he doesn't use any online networks. The only way we can reach him is by phone. (laughter)

**Zan** Yes, that is a problem. Anyway, I am reading his book. He recently published two books on world history. New books are very interesting, and I believe he is now not only focusing on the Ottoman Empire — like your experience — , but now also on world history, like the way you are considering global history.

## The Positioning of Historians: A Matter of Identity

**Haneda** In the end, then — and coming back to my own experience, now — , I have become quite interested in the positionality of the historian. For whom are we now writing, for what reason are we now trying to understand the past, and who am I in the end? That is a very important question for me. This question leads me now to the topic of identity.

**Zan** This is another big question for me, now. It takes time. Twenty years.

**Haneda** It takes time.

**Zan** I think I am still in the “missionary phase.” I would prefer to focus on thinking about history.



**Haneda** Well, what about your impressions after coming to Tokyo? You've been here for about one and a half months, so do you have any impressions? How is your plan going, smoothly or not?

**Zan** Yes, it is good. You know, it seems that we are having a quiet time. Also, as you know, China is now experiencing a new type of corona virus which emerged in Wuhan. It's a shock. When I was a student in the year 2003, there was SARS. Then, the year that I was studying in Turkey as a PhD student in 2006, there was the bird flu. This is what global history really cares about.

**Haneda** Yes, of course, epidemics.

**Zan** Epidemics, right. This is a very hot topic for global history, at least dating back to the Black Death. In any case, we are experiencing history today.

**Haneda** Yes, indeed. Now that you're here, and given all your experience, do you find some similarities or differences between the atmosphere of academia in Japan and China?

**Zan** Quite similar, because I think historians in Japan and those in China are similarly very conservative.

**Haneda** Very conservative, except me.

**Zan** You are not a very typical one. (laughter) They are conservative. Historians are very different from social scientists. The other day, in my seminar, there was a Japanese scholar who told me: "It is interesting that for you as a historian — we know that you are a historian, you are trained in that, you publish in history — , but you are also very concerned with contemporary Turkish issues. Why is

that?” I think I can understand this question very well, because some of my colleagues in China also ask me this question. For people who ask about this, I am not a very conservative historian either.

In fact, this is not easy, since we have very few experts on Turkish studies in China. I try to give a very historical answer to questions about contemporary issues. Every time, I bring history into the answer.

**Haneda** I think that is the correct way of being a historian.

**Zan** Yes. It helps us understand history also. For example, observing the failed coup gave me a lot of inspiration for doing historical research.

**Haneda** When I got my PhD in France, in a sense I was just a very conservative historian, because you know I just really focused on texts and documents, which has no relation at all with the contemporary Iranian revolution, etc., so it was quite difficult for me to connect these two together at that moment. But, now ...

**Zan** But you can connect them now as an expert of global history.

**Haneda** I am not quite sure, maybe I can do something now, but at that moment it was impossible for me.

**Zan** Now, since I am also involved in Area Studies at PKU, more different perceptions are possible. I know a professor who is a distinguished professor of pre-modern Iranian studies, and he also trained students in contemporary Iranian studies. He is affiliated with area studies on his campus.

**Haneda** But it is a question of how you use all of these materials. In the past, I just read the text for no particular reason — just reading itself was very important. Of course, you can use all of these texts to understand the contemporary world.

**Zan** I agree. When I returned to China from Turkey, people would ask me a lot about contemporary Turkey. But at time, I even didn't know the name of Turkey's prime minister. As you said, I only read historical materials. For conservative people, that is a historian, right?

**Haneda** Purely academic.

### Professor Zan's Plan in the Future

**Haneda** One final official question, so what's your plan in the future? For example, in terms of your research topics; it's too early to talk about your plan after retirement.

**Zan** There are many things to work on. But my current plan is to further the connectedness or connections between Chinese and Japanese world history, especially in the field of Middle East studies. While dealing with world history, many Japanese historians still keep a very traditional philological approach. I found that Japanese scholars had translated many historical texts into Japanese from the original languages and with very good notes. For many key concepts they use Chinese characters. I think this is a good aspect that Chinese historians of world history should pay attention to. In the field of Ottoman Turkish studies, at least, I think this is very important.

**Haneda** So do you also plan to come back to Tokyo, come to Japan quite often?

**Zan** If condition allows. We are working on this connection. In fact, this is why I voluntarily wrote that introduction to Professor HAYASHI Kayoko's book. I tried to reveal what is happening in Japan. Over the past three years, dozens of books on Ottoman Turkish history have been translated into Chinese, but the best one which can answer my questions is HAYASHI Kayoko's. It is written for East Asian people, I would say. Europeans have their particular concerns, and they have more sources to rely on than the people of East Asia. I think that the Chinese and Japanese scholars, students as well as readers have something more in common.

**Haneda** I hope your endeavors to connect Chinese and Japanese scholars continue and blossom in the near future. Thank you for today's talk. I enjoyed very much.

**Zan** Thank you.

---

Afterword

## Some Thoughts after the Dialogue with Professor Haneda

ZAN Tao

---

It is a great pleasure for me to write something five months after the dialogue with Professor Haneda at the University of Tokyo. The three months that I spent in Tokyo from December 2019 to February 2020 were bound to be distinct, especially in view of the outbreak of COVID-19. We did touch upon the epidemic during our dialogue, in a sense also as a record of history, but at that time we did not know how it would develop. Now I am in Beijing, and this week there are again dozens of newly-reported cases in this city, after nearly two months of zero cases. The level of prevention and control was raised from three back up to two.

For most people, this is an unprecedented crisis. Tens of thousands of people have lost their lives. The measures of quarantine and social distancing have had a very strong impact on economic, social and political life globally, not only this year but also surely for the future. New technologies have made things more visible and people more subject to supervision than any time in history. This global crisis and the information about it can today be observed in an unprecedented synchrony. Every day, we have concrete numbers for the number of different cases in most parts of the world.

But these have not made possible any newly-imagined global commu-

nity. To the contrary, the politicization of COVID-19 by irresponsible politicians has been witnessed in many countries. The new global crisis should have been a point of closer global cooperation. But in reality, de-globalization is accelerating. During this crisis, I am more worried about the deterioration of the Sino-U.S. relationship.

The main theme of our dialogue at UTokyo was global history. We both agree that global history is an approach to the study and teaching of history. Professor Haneda also talked about his personal experience of becoming an expert of Iranian studies, and how he transformed himself into a pioneering scholar of global history. As a junior scholar, I have learned a lot from this dialogue with Professor Haneda.

We do not know about the future. History is concerned with the past. It is totally different from propaganda. Sometimes, ambitious people might say that history can tell us something about the future, but I am quite pessimistic about this claim. Historians are more likely the watchdogs of facts. On many occasions, then, real and serious historians are unwelcome especially for the political class. During the COVID-19 crisis, voices from both experts on epidemic prevention and historians are worth our attention.

An absent-minded semester has passed. I finished teaching three courses online. But I have never seen any of my students in person. From time to time, I have been missing the scents of flowers in Kashiwanoha Park in Chiba. The taste of Turkish kebab in Ueno Park is also unforgettable. I hope that I can meet all friends face to face as soon as possible. Until then, please stay healthy!

June 21, 2020

ZAN Tao



---

**Afterword****Historians' Dialogue in the Pandemic Era**HANEDA Masashi

---

Looking backward from today, to consider what's taking place around the globe, who would have ventured they foresaw: History, tackling a past for now and the future as widely known, in a sense humbles humankind. What a timely and apt dialogue it was; I had a pleasant and thought-stimulating in-person talk with Professor Tao Zan at an inchoate stage of the Covid-19 epidemic, immediately before it became a salient threat in our daily lives. In our explorations of global history, pandemics themselves have counted among our interests.

With thanks to my Chinese friends, I have also enjoyed a good friendship and fellowship with eminent historians at Peking University; Professor Zan is one of them. In fact, I was deeply impressed when I received his introduction, for he is the very historian whose research field concerns Turkey and the Middle East, a region for which there are few experts in Chinese academia. Furthermore, to my surprise, Professor Zan's research interests in the Ottoman Empire and the emergence of the modern Turkish nation share a common ground with my long-held contentions regarding world history/global history. During my visit to Beijing as a visiting professor at PKU, Professor Zan offered lavish hospitality and we had great conversations on the issue. Now it was my turn, when he came to Tokyo as a visiting scholar at the East Asian Academy for New Liberal Arts (EAA), which had just launched a joint research

and educational program with PKU in 2019. Needless to say, it was a great pleasure for me.

In this dialogue, we touched upon the emergence of the notion of world history, and how it has been developed and understood with comparative perspectives, taking mainly Chinese and Japanese cases. Intriguingly, Professor Zan and I reached a consensus to understand “global history” as an approach per se in the definition and the usage of the terms “world history” and “global history.” This understanding of history may pave the way for new insights that overcome nation-centric views on history, e.g., for China, South Korea, and Japan in particular. I also enjoyed learning what led young graduate student Zan to study Turkish history and to become a historian. Including a short story of my own, I hope you find this dialogue both amusing and, by tracing the trajectory of two scholars’ growth, enables you to find the value in studying history and becoming a historian.

Milieu is a pivotal factor in the shaping of our understanding of the world and its history. This is often taken for granted. Owing to this fact, it’s natural for us to have a variety of historical interpretations. What is needed most amongst these is a relentless endeavor to seek what is behind this or that historical interpretation, i.e., how it has evolved and what constitutes it. In order to realize this, virtually no one would deny the importance of scholarly exchange and fellowship. In this regard, I feel very privileged to have a role in strengthening this international endeavor, especially between scholars in China, South Korea, and Japan.

The development of technology offers a new opportunity to be connected online, as we see now with the phenomenon of Zoom. Simultaneously, as Zoom-fatigue emerges, we also face new challenges, and long for the genuine values of being human and living in a shared society. Looking back, I see that meeting Professor Zan in person and having this

talk were together a special and precious moment. Hoping to meet and have a delightful conversation again, I would like to continue to contribute to this scholarly work in times of crisis.

June, 2020

HANEDA Masashi



---

## About ZAN Tao and HANEDA Masashi

### ZAN Tao (曾涛)

Assistant Professor in the History department and Area Studies Institute at Peking University. Professor Zan specializes in Turkish and Ottoman Studies. His publications include *Modern State and Nation Building: A Study on Turkish Nationalism in the Early 20th Century* (SDX Joint Publishing Company, Beijing, 2011).

### HANEDA Masashi (羽田正)

Executive Director and Vice-President of the University of Tokyo. Director of Tokyo College. Professor Haneda's research interests include world/global history, and the emergence and formation of national identity. Among many works (some are translated in various languages), his publications include 『グローバル化と世界史』(東京大学出版会, 2018), *Maritime History of East Asia*, (co-edited with OKA Mihoko, Kyoto University Press & Trans Pacific Press, 2019), 『東インド公司与垂洲之海』(北京日報出版社、2020).

This dialogue was held on January 21, 2020, at EAA Hongo Office.



## 編集者

具 裕 珍 (EAA 特任助教)  
前野清太朗 (EAA 特任助教)  
Mark Roberts (EAA 特任研究員)

## 編集協力

崎濱紗奈 (EAA 特任研究員)  
王雯璐 (EAA リサーチ・アシスタント)

EAA Booklet 4

EAA Dialogue 3

Zan Tao × HANEDA Masashi

[咎涛 × 羽田正 January 21, 2020]

著 者 咎涛 羽田正

発 行 日 2020 年 6 月 20 日

発 行 者 東京大学東アジア藝文書院

製作協力 一般財団法人東京大学出版会

デザイン 株式会社 designfolio / 佐々木由美

印刷・製本 株式会社真興社

© 2020 East Asian Academy for New Liberal Arts,  
the University of Tokyo