

Mizoguchi Yuzo's Chinese Kitai Revisited: Worlding the Sinic Order through Multisited Recollections

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Paper Abstract: I engage with Mizoguchi Yuzo's (1932-2010) notion of Sinic kitai (base substance; body history; underlying thing, essential being), through which he hoped to re-World Japan, in this paper through a multisited approach. It questions the typical epistemological collusion between social science and history that treats China as a distinctive, substantive entity, tangible or intangible. It juxtaposes the contemporary Japanese intellectual's strategy to reconstruct Japan's historical path in order to reconnect to the Sinic world order and the colonized communities' strategies to release their own subjectivities from within the same order. The paper enlists multiple sites of China studies that deconstruct the Sinic world order through the Worlded historical subjectivities coming out of Korea, Vietnam, Mongolia, and Chinese communities in Southeast Asia. By showing multiple possibilities of re-mapping the Sinic world order, the contending formulations of what China is in the mainstream English, Chinese, and Japanese literature can each find their own places in specific historical contexts so that students of China studies are able to appreciate that China studies and China scholars are mutually constituted, so are the Sinic world order and China scholarship.