This essay analyzes Gao Xingjian’s Soul Mountain (1990) and Wuhe’s The Remains of Life (1999) and their reflections on history and what lies beyond or outside of history. In the face of past traumas, the Cultural Revolution in China, the Maha Incident, in Wuhe’s case, both authors and their respective protagonists turn to prehistory. Gao and his protagonist, split into different perspectives, travel through China in search not only of the “soul mountains” of the title, but of natural preserves and minority cultures. Wuhe’s protagonist dwells among the indigenous Atayal in Taiwan and becomes especially interested in the practice of headhunting—one of the rituals conventionally associated with the “primitive.” And yet, each author effects much more than a simple return to an imagined prehistory. In their texts, the renegotiation of historical trauma acquires a complex temporality: not only a return to the traumatic event, not merely a finally unfettered and unfufillable desire for a world untouched by trauma and history, but also a reflection on what remains of and after trauma. These texts highlight and question the construction of dichotomy between history and its ineffable other nor to a total immanence of history? What is the hallmark craft the remains of history into a site of possibility? Can we glimpse a moment that neither succumbs to the history with and through its other (s): If the logos of history always needs its own constructed other-as non-reflect on what remains of and after trauma. These texts highlight and question the construction of primitivism, unmarked by trauma? What kind of text can reflect on history’s violent character without inviting an eternal return of trauma, but also a renegotiation of historical trauma acquires a complex temporality: not only a return to the traumatic event, not merely a finally unfettered and unfufillable desire for a world untouched by trauma and history, but also a reflection on what remains of and after trauma. These texts highlight and question the construction of dichotomy between history and its ineffable other nor to a total immanence of history? What is the hallmark craft the remains of history into a site of possibility? Can we glimpse a moment that neither succumbs to the history with and through its other (s): If the logos of history always needs its own constructed other-as non-