Asia-Pacific: Culture, Politics, and Society
Editors: Rey Chow, H. D. Harootunian,
and Masao Miyoshi

LEARNING PLACES

The Afterlives of Area Studies

Edited by Masao Miyoshi & H. D. Harootunian

Duke University Press Durham and London 2002

Contents

Acknowledgments ix

Introduction: The "Afterlife" of Area Studies 1

Ivory Tower in Escrow / *Masao Miyoshi* 19

Andō Shōeki—"The Forgotten Thinker" in Japanese History / *Tetsuo Najita* 61

Objectivism and the Eradication of Critique in Japanese History / *Stefan Tanaka* 80

Theory, Area Studies, Cultural Studies: Issues of Pedagogy in Multiculturalism / *Rey Chow* 103

Signs of Our Times: A Discussion of Homi Bhabha's *The Location of Culture* / *Benita Parry* 119

Postcoloniality's Unconscious / Area Studies' Desire / *H. D. Harootunian* 150

Asian Exclusion Acts / *Sylvia Yanagisako* 175

Areas, Disciplines, and Ethnicity / *Richard H. Okada* 190

Can American Studies Be Area Studies? / *Paul A. Bové* 206

Imagining "Asia-Pacific" Today: Forgetting Colonialism in the Magical Free Markets of the American Pacific / *Rob Wilson* 231

Boundary Displacement: The State, the Foundations, and Area Studies during and after the Cold War / *Bruce Cumings* 261

The Disappearance of Modern Japan: Japan and Social Science / *Bernard S. Silberman* 303

Bad Karma in Asia / *Moss Roberts* 321

From Politics to Culture: Modern Japanese Literary Studies in the Age of Cultural Studies / *James A. Fujii* 344

Questions of Japanese Cinema: Disciplinary Boundaries and the Invention of the Scholarly Object / *Mitsuhiro Yoshimoto* 368

Contributors 403

Index 405

Acknowledgments

Most of the essays included in this volume have been presented in a series of interdisciplinary and collaborative workshops and seminars over the past several years. For making this long and large-scale project possible, we are grateful once again to the University of California, San Diego (Office of the President, the Organized Research Project in the Humanities). We are also indebted to the dean of the School of Arts and Sciences, New York University, and the Center for International and Comparative Studies, Northwestern University.

Introduction: The "Afterlife" of Area Studies

H. D. Harootunian and Masao Miyoshi

As globalization thickens, the site of research grows increasingly mobile. That means that the sponsors, practices, and products of research, too, are no longer confined to the locale where a given project in area studies is being undertaken. On the other hand, the intensity, extensivity, and velocity of globalization are multiple and variable, requiring a particularized reexamination. The relationship of this revised area studies to other emergent disciplines such as cultural studies, ethnic and gender studies, as well as received disciplines must also be subjected to a rigorous scrutiny. During the past several years newspapers like the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* have regularly run a number of articles on the funding programs and the roles played by foreign donors who seem all too willing to give money to universities and colleges for curriculum enhancement and research on specific regions of the world. It is embarrassing to read the disclaimers of university administrators and program chairs that the money comes with no strings attached and that its acceptance is necessary for carrying out research. The former is as convincing as those explanations issued by both Republican and Democratic parties that donations do not privilege the special interests of the donors; the latter is always dragged out to serve as a de rigueur response by administrators whose function in life is to orchestrate permanent financial crises in order to induce faculty to search for more funds.

The really important question that must be asked and discussed, in this post-Cold War situation, however, concerns the need of foreign governments, mostly outside of Euro-America, to pay American universities and colleges to teach courses on their histories and societies. With a few exceptions, European governments have not undertaken large-scale funding expeditions in the United States to support the study of their national histories and cultures. In the case of the French, for instance, there has been a regular arrangement where the French government sends distinguished scholars, writers, and artists on what is called

mission to lecture on French culture in colleges and universities. This tactic, echoing the *mission civilisatrice* of an earlier imperialism, presumably allows the unwashed only the authority of native informants, but does not let them have the privilege of representing France. This program resembles the Japan Foundation's attempt to disseminate Japanese culture throughout the world. It is, however, far less ambitious and generous in the sense that it doesn't supply large cash hand-outs for the training of graduate students in French studies and the augmentation of language and substantive courses in colleges. The same can be said of the Goethe Institute of Germany or the British Council of the U.K.

Not too long ago the Ford Foundation announced the implementation of a new program aimed at encouraging colleges and universities to rethink the mission of area studies. Presumably, it hoped for producing integrated knowledge of areas tailored for a new generation of students whose interest in history and geography is generally far more curtailed than their antecedents. Throughout its history the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) has often embarked upon the reexamination of its area studies committee structure and the organization of the area studies discipline. More recently, the SSRC has considered how it might be altered in an age of accelerating globalization and shrinking funds. The question for the SSRC is how the study and research on areas might be more effectively continued in the absence of large-scale funding. Even the Association of Asian Studies, rarely given to self-reflection, has grudgingly made available space to panels devoted to the discussion of the structure of area studies. In fact, some of the essays in this volume were first delivered in these panels and at a president's roundtable in 1997 that tried to explore the problem of funding and what was to be done in the future.

Any consideration of Asian studies must begin with its enabling structure of knowledge. Historically, area studies programs, as suggested by a number of the essays in this volume, originated in the immediate post-World War II era and sought to meet the necessity of gathering and providing information about the enemy. Later, the investigation was extended to any region of the world considered vital to the interests of the United States in the Cold War. Perhaps unlike other new formations in the social sciences and humanities, area studies relied heavily on domestic extramural funding. Earlier, donations were predominantly from private foundations that would be later replaced by the federal government. The Fulbright Program also began early to encourage American scholars to spend time in foreign countries for purposes of research and teaching. The Fulbright fellowships were not restricted to the Third World but envisaged a comprehensive program that included much of the globe. Along the way, the program became a means of inducing people to research areas outside of traditional

Europe by supplying the necessary resources for travel and long-term residence. One of the purposes of the Fulbright fellowships was to provide the rest of the world with cultural emissaries from the United States who would serve as living examples of American values of democracy and capitalism. By the same measure, the program was also designed to enlist foreign scholars and bring them to the United States where they would have the opportunity to be directly inculcated into the American way of life. The Americans also gathered news, views, and opinions from the visiting scholars to construct a vision of the world as befitted the leader of the Western democracies.

In more recent years, the Japan Foundation and the International Research Center for Japanese Studies in Kyoto (Nichibunken), both sponsored by the Japanese ministry of education (Monbusho) and other government ministries, have expanded upon the Fulbright model by establishing programs that actively seek to encourage people to visit Japan for study and research on Japan. The generosity of such programs has resembled that of the Fulbright, designed to promote national cultural values in foreign visitors. Nichibunken, however, is sharply distinguishable from the Fulbright. There is an unmistakable agenda in the Kyoto institution to influence and control the study of Japanese culture by making grantees intellectually and financially dependent on the resources offered by the center. What Nichibunken and, to a lesser extent, the Japan Foundation have sought to accomplish is both the encouragement of Japanese studies by foreigners and the establishment of the unquestioned primacy of native authority. In this respect, the French *mission*, for example, resembles this cultural conceit, but is carried out on a much smaller scale, as has been already mentioned. In fact, the difference in scale puts the Japanese Foundation in a class by itself. Not only does the foundation offer funding for all of the major regions of the globe but the total sum expended, according to the most recent report, is close to $1.5 billion as of the year 1996; the United States commands nearly 19 percent of this total. The Kyoto center, a smaller operation, simply adds to the hegemony of Japanese funding for the dissemination of Japanese studies. By contrast, the Korean Foundation in 1999 gave only $19 million to the United States and proportionately far less worldwide and pales in significance compared to Japan's "generosity."

Furthermore, the French, unlike the Japanese, Taiwanese, and Koreans, need not fear that without their financial intervention, their national cultures and histories will be forgotten in American colleges and universities. There is an interesting symmetry between the establishment of area programs in the newly imperial United States at the moment of decolonization and the concurrent emphasis upon cultural authority among former colonial empires such as Britain and France as a means of patrolling and controlling interior cultural boundaries.

Again, the French *mission* represents a smaller version of the cultural management which the Japanese, especially, have sought to implement. Even when the French government designates centers of French studies in American universities, as it has in the recent past, the gifts have been minuscule compared to Japan's munificence. But in this difference there hangs a tale: the French and the Germans, who have also funded programs and conferences in the United States, do not really need to fear that the study of their respective cultures and languages will disappear if they are not supported by the metropolitan countries while the Japanese, Koreans, and Taiwanese seem convinced that they must continue this lifeline of assistance or risk the diminution of interest in their cultures in America's colleges and universities. The difference is one between outright subsidization of cultural and language studies and simply support. It is, in any event, in this convergence of forces in history that the problem of foreign sponsorship of the teaching and researching of Asian societies and cultures in American schools must be probed. American schools are unlikely to cease teaching about Asia even if these governments do not supply the cash. But the scale will change and the responsibility for the teaching of cultures and histories may well be, as it already seems to be, assimilated into hyphenated ethnic studies programs that promise students identity in difference. In this regard, hyphenated ethnic studies has, perhaps inadvertently, recuperated the concept of national character that attended and served the formation of area studies programs after World War II, but has renamed it as ethnic identity.

The foreign donations in Asian studies in the United States, especially, but also in the United Kingdom and Western Europe, coincide with the moment Japan, and then South Korea and Taiwan, entered the global stage as serious economic competitors. That is to say, this new cultural offense was inaugurated when Asian economies like Japan and South Korea began to change the terms of their involvement in the global economy, and turned increasingly from being territorially oriented exporters to global competitors in transnational manufacturing and financial activity. The decision by the Japanese, followed by the South Koreans and Taiwanese, to channel large amounts of cash into American colleges and universities for the augmentation of courses on language, culture, and history was linked to this drive for global recognition. It was an effort of these Asian countries to disseminate a favorable image in the United States precisely at the moment when their trade and manufacturing practices were being denounced in the popular press. Thus while these donations were initially directed by government agencies, funding sources came to include private firms. Often corporations would give their gifts directly to the chosen university or college. What is important about this development is that it represented a new

stage in the history of area studies by inserting it in an emerging globalizing process that would become dominant once the Cold War ended. One of the ironies of this narrative of development is that area studies has been gradually transformed from the status of supplying information on potential enemies to national interest and security to highly visible public relations services devoted to providing "balanced" (read as uncritical) images of donor societies to an educated segment of the American public, and certainly to that part of the population who will become experts in the formation of public opinion. In the United States, Japanese studies led the way in this transformation and proved itself vital to Japanese donors years ago when influential Japanologists dismissed signs of criticism as "Japan bashing."

The most obvious areas of concentration were the Soviet Union, East Asia, Latin America, the Middle East, and Africa. The last region to be researched as a unit under governmental control was probably Japan's East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, which for a short duration studied the peoples and societies within the empire—a practice started earlier by the South Manchurian Railway. In our time, the European Union (EU) supports research among its member states. At any rate, the actual object of study was usually reduced to the unit of a national society, which was politically and strategically more useful, while pedagogically easier to validate and examine holistically, than a heterogeneous region. Today, the nation-state is still the principal agency for raising and distributing money, but increasingly the sponsors are foreign governments rather than the United States, reflecting changes in the world economy. The important feature of this newer project is that these contributions are made to support the study of a specific nation-state so that, for example, the Korea Foundation seldom provides assistance for East Asian studies but nearly always for Korean studies. The same is true of the Japan Foundation and the Taiwanese-based Chiang Ching Kuo Foundation. One of the initial purposes of these new area studies programs was to incorporate the teaching of obscure languages and national cultures into the academic procession, usually finding a place at the rear, where its proponents insisted they had to fight for limited resources. Once this structure was put into place, all that remained were periodic adjustments to the established arrangement of teaching, training, and research to changing political exigencies throughout the globe. This worry was inevitably expressed in the hunt for money, which very early became the principal vocation and justification for area studies, like all other organized bureaucracies.

More than fifty years after the war's end, American scholars are still organizing knowledge as if confronted by an implacable enemy and thus driven by the desire to either destroy it or marry it. Area studies as it was implanted in col-

leges and universities and their adherents still ceaselessly seek to maintain the received structure of operations with new infusions of cash in a world more global and culturally borderless than the one that existed at the inception of the Cold War. Like those jerrybuilt temporary dwellings thrown up on many campuses during World War II, area studies outlived the original reason for its construction and has become an entrenched structure that maintains the separation of area expertise from general knowledge.

In this, organizations like the Association of Asian Studies stand as empty signs of that missed opportunity to make the study of a specific area part of the general learning of the world. In fact, this separation is inextricable from the fragmentation and isolation of disciplines of knowledge from each other that should be critically and integrally responsive to historical changes. The practice of encouraging the isolation and fragmentation of disciplines, which reinforces their own claims to autonomy, was undoubtedly part of a strategy to control the discipline's subject matter and faculty hierarchy by keeping it free from the interventions by other disciplines. The desire of area studies to offer full disciplinary representation, despite such absence of integral knowledge, is like trying to determine how many swallows make a summer. Throughout, there has never been any attempt to explain why funding is more important than thinking about the reasons for funding. And the obsessive search for cash has resulted in suppressing any genuine concern with thinking through new ways to organize and disseminate the knowledge about Asia or the Middle East, without surrendering such a vocation to business and governmental interests.

These are different days where the student body has undergone a serious change. Although it is in some measure a part of a larger failure of higher education to meet the challenge of people who are convinced they now live in a "post-historical" age, the refusal of area studies to face the changed reality is obtuse and critical. These days the study of languages reflects something of the changed nature of the world that prompts the interests of students in a startlingly new way. Enrollments in Russian have declined precipitously, as have the figures for the study of German, Italian, and French. Spanish recruits more students than any other language, with Japanese and Chinese closing in. The reason for the preference is obviously linked to perceptions of business opportunities. And above all, the invincible confidence in English as the lingua franca of this new world is making nearly all language programs at best halfhearted. Isn't it time that we seriously think about what we do in area studies and the liberal arts structure sustaining it? Should this unexamined compulsion to continue and repeat be allowed to go on? If yes, on what basis, and for what reason? Why don't we seriously examine the reason for continuing to teach areas and

regions as if they were remote and unknown yet somehow vital to national interests?

The pursuit of new sources of funding is, in part, driven by the desire to sustain the received structure of organization and the knowledge it is devoted to producing. It should be pointed out that area studies was organized to simplify a region or nation-state into a formula in order to place it in the college curriculum. To this end, it offered a holistic knowledge of the area that, more often than not, was aided by native claims to uniqueness. To insure the legitimacy of area studies, the traditional humanistic and social scientific disciplines were utilized as if they would interconnect an area with the rest of the world and bridge disciplines with all others. Every program therefore was required to have a specialist in history, literature, language, anthropology, economics, sociology, geography, etc. But they never really cohered.

A commitment to this form of organization meant that area studies, despite its claims to be multidisciplinary, actually ended up supporting the retention of disciplinary boundaries, as it still does in the major area studies centers. What else could be expected from a practice that had never thought through the epistemological implications of constituting a subject of inquiry but merely assumed its status as a field and organized the traditional disciplines to subsequently examine what, in fact, was a vacant lot? We must recognize in this designation of a "field" not only a difference from the status of the more traditional discipline of Euro-America, which has never been called "fieldwork.".It strikes particular resonance with the ethnographic project that—itself, a product of Euro-American claims to universalism—was conceived as an "outside" study of primitives, natives, simple societies, peoples, and cultures that analogously belonged to the temporality of childhood closely resembling Freud's uncanny. In its beginnings, doing research meant extracting from the field the raw material of pure facticity, literally fieldwork. Since this field was on the outside, it was seen simply as the domain of fact, the object of analysis that would be carried out elsewhere, in the inside, the territory of theory and research. The resemblance of this operation to an earlier imperial practice that saw the world outside of Europe as a vast dominion containing raw materials to be extracted by cheap labor for production in Euro-America is far from being a coincidence and constitutes a historical isomorphism frequently overlooked in even the most critical discourses of postcoloniality. Area studies, despite its arrival with decolonization, thus succeeded in reinforcing this imperial-colonial relationship by maintaining that Euro-America was the privileged site of production, in every sense of the word, while the outside was simply the space for "development" which originated elsewhere.

Paradoxically, area studies has now become the main custodian of an isolating system of disciplinary knowledge, which was originally ranked near the bottom of the academic hierarchy. By the same measure, it is committed to preserving the nation-state as the privileged unit of teaching and study. In this sense it was the perfect, microcosmic reflection of the liberal arts curriculum that since the nineteenth century has been focused on the nation-state as the organizing principle for teaching and research. A new combinatory, meant to integrate the disciplines and opening the way for interdisciplinary study, has become nothing more than a moated wall, insulating the disciplines from the outside world, maintaining boundaries in order to prevent crossings. In retrospect, it now seems possible to conclude that area studies never intended to bring several disciplines together, despite its promise to do so. The reason for this is that it never expunged its own desire to reduce study and research to the manageable dimensions of national character, in spite of its reliance on social science models that often emphasized the centrality of "normative" social systems.

If area studies is contrasted with the newer cultural studies, we can see that while the former has sought to close off the study of a particular national unit from the rest of the world, the latter claims openness as a condition for examining such units in a broader context. While cultural studies has attempted to blur the boundaries of disciplines and even dissolve them, area studies has today become the beleaguered fortress housing the traditional disciplines as if nothing had changed in the last fifty years, a Maginot Line already obsolete before its completion yet determined to protect its domains from infiltration and appropriation. Although quite antiquated now, the strategy of trench warfare is deployed by scholars of area studies as they try to mount an attack on an enemy they scarcely understand. Their obsession has been so intense over the long duration that we must seriously question the psychological as well as political-economic energy driving it.

Humanities scholars over the past several decades have shown a marked loss of interest in the general survey and bibliography of studies in a given field. Once an obligatory reference for all scholars, young or old, such listing and ranking of antecedent scholarly achievements are now infrequently attempted, and seldom respected in most branches of the humanities. The bibliography is after all the mapping and chronology of a discourse. It is difficult to compile at a moment like ours where the required central authority for evaluation has largely vanished from the arena of scholarship. This difficulty may reflect the general skepticism regarding authority, or the recent cultural turn toward poststructuralism, or the simple acceptance of diversity and fracture within disciplinary

practice. Still, a bibliography can be either an instrument of centralized surveillance and control on behalf of the established structure (that would deter emerging methods and queries), or a documentation of evolving possibilities and challenges (that would offer a meeting ground for dissenters.) The latter, the oppositionist register, is rarely compiled and sanctioned, while the former, characterized by hierarchism and authoritarianism, the sine qua non of the humanities, is being set aside for now. And yet a total absence of attempts to sort out, interrelate, and map out ideas and analyses could result in a loss of critical scholarship, coherent reference, and articulate knowledge.

The essays collected in this volume, *Learning Places,* would examine the institutions and productions of learning as well as what it takes to learn a place. While the majority of the essays instantiate the national unit of Japan, it is demonstratively evident that the practice of Japanese area studies does not differ significantly from the experience of other culture regions, despite the recognition of local variations that undoubtedly stem from the received culture. As an organized and disciplined practice aimed at extracting knowledge of a specific site, an area studies concentrating on Japan shares more in common with the study of other areas than the often vast differences between cultural formations would seem to imply. In any case, the various articles in this volume review the existing scholarship from the perspectives of the emergent, critical, and, perhaps, oppositional. This anthology is not a bibliography, of course, but it takes its position vis-à-vis what passes today for the standard scholarship in Asian studies in particular.

Take, for example, the recently published *The Postwar Developments of Japanese Studies in the United States,* edited by Helen Hardacre (Leiden, Boston, and Koln: Brill, 1998). A collection of thirteen essays by thirteen hands—each assigned to a scholarly field of recent history, early history, foreign relations, religions, literary studies, anthropology, social science, legal studies, etc. in the United States. The contributions vary, of course, in intelligence, learning, articulation, and general execution. And yet certain remarks must be made regarding the volume as a whole. Scholars who are members of larger and entrenched centers predictably organize the book, obviously meant to be the voice of authority and orthodoxy, according to the received disciplines. Their collective efforts are thus to reinforce, in each of these chapters, the normativity of older practices. The authors by and large discount newer studies they neither seek to understand nor appear to have actually bothered to examine. Often arguments are so simpleminded that it is difficult to avoid concluding that the writers are hiding their discomfort with their novel subjects, which loom as a threat to their ex cathedra position and must feel that their most vital religious princi-

ples are being violated. The resistance to newer perspectives is, as everyone knows, often prompted by a reluctance or inability to do the work involved in acquiring an understanding of the unknown, the difficult, the unfamiliar. Updating is hard and exhausting, but that is what is required if one wants to stand side by side with the emergent, the scholars who must examine the world in their own terms here and now. And it is this task that many established scholars are not willing to undertake.

Harold Bolitho's survey of postwar historiography on Japan is no doubt the most symptomatic performance in this book. The author recycles what he wrote twenty years before as if time had not passed. In this survey of current scholarship, Bolitho not only repeats himself, but offers nothing substantive whatever. And yet he dissembles. The title of his paper is "Tokugawa Japan: The Return of the Other," but even this innocuous phrasing not only reveals a desire to appear up-to-date but also confirms the unexceptional observation that the works and authors he denounced years back have had a wider impact than he originally "predicted." The only performance Bolitho attempts in the essay is a dismissal of what he calls "new intellectual history" that "relies on" strange personages that he has never read, that he does not understand, and that are totally irrelevant to Tokugawa Japan or scholars like himself: Louis Althusser, Michel Foucault, John Frow, Hayden White, Paul de Man, Emile Benveniste, Fredric Jameson, Catherine Belsey, Paul Ricouer, Pierre Bourdieu. The list goes on for half a page, mentioning theorists whom graduate, or even undergraduate, students anywhere else would encounter in their required reading list in the humanities and the social sciences nowadays. Bolitho issues his denunciation from a position of authority and privilege that he assumes for no evident reason. He even goes as far as to condemn a younger scholar who has shown sympathies to new interpretative strategies as an "apostate," treason, according to Bolitho, to "conventional intellectual history." Is scholarship still an ecclesiastic practice?

Beyond Bolitho's annoyance with declining control, the volume as a whole is little more than a mechanical list assembled in an age of electronic retrieval systems that have made such activities generally useless today. But if we can recognize the inutility of a now-obsolescent mode of an uncritically cumulative scholarship, we can also see in it another purpose that is still operative. Among the diverse culture regions that make up area studies, Japanese studies has put together more field surveys and state-of-the-field accounts than any other constituency. (This record perhaps attests to the amount of money the Japanese government, by contrast to others, has been willing to invest in the development and maintenance of Japanese studies in the United States.) These lists at the

same time claim full and comprehensive coverage, even as they intend otherwise. Driving this comprehensive impulse is, of course, the desire to appear neutral. Yet this apparent neutrality often conceals dismissal, as in the case of those bibliographies that quite deliberately omit certain authors and works and thus make an ideological statement without appearing ideological. What is eschewed, in any case, is theoretic criticism itself, which once was a code for Marxism. Area studies is approaching the end of the road, when it begins identifying heretics and threatens excommunication. These efforts to defend the order of things only succeed in betraying their own irrelevance in a world that scarcely takes note of their presence. Yet the survey also constitutes a sign of a new form of ancestor worship that the larger research centers now practice with religious zeal. Isn't the naming of institutes and research programs after founders, for instance, a new form of the deep-rooted devotional habit in the field studied by American Asianists? Is ancestor worship a function of maintaining the authority and dignity of the institution? What are we to make of the ritual of honoring founders who had been pioneers in establishing the area studies model in larger, national research universities and who subsequently were the procurers of funding from the governments and private corporations of societies they were devoted to studying? Thus we have the Reischauer Institute, the Fairbank Center at Harvard, the Keene Center at Columbia, and who knows what else. At these shrines, the venerated wisdom of the founders is constantly commemorated. But wouldn't naming an institution after a scholar in the field make critical investigation difficult to conduct? Of course, there is the widespread frenzy recently of raising endowments that result in naming anything namable on the campus after the monetary benefactors or political leaders. But the naming of a building after a rich and powerful man or woman is not expected to raise any sense of reverence for his or her academic or intellectual achievement; everyone knows it is the expression of the sheer power of money. The gesture of honoring an intellectual achievement is quite something else on a university campus. That gesture is a long way from the Fermi whose name adorns a scientific research facility outside Chicago and the Reischauer whose involvements with the Japanese have earned him an institute named after him at Harvard University. It sets the standard, the direction, the orientation—in short, the ideology—of scholarship in a powerfully tangible fashion.

These centers are devoted to a knowledge that is believed to be accessible only through the acquisition of the necessary language. In this operation there is the presumption of the transparency of language as an unmediated conveyor of native truths and knowledge, that filter through once the words of another language are understood. With Asian studies, especially the study of China and Ja-

pan, this has led to a privileging of the translation as the most perfect means of disclosing the truth of native knowledge, and has resulted in making the translation not only the preferred model of scholarly activity but as the sign of having acquired the only method needed, which is learning the language. On the other hand, it has meant that in the idiographic disciplines the principal technique has not been translation but simple paraphrase of a native scholar properly identified. Much of the work associated with area studies in the heroic days of the Cold War was really a variation on this model of knowledge production (or reproduction, to put it more precisely) and thus a prefiguration of the later identification of area studies programs and the national societies they are devoted to studying and teaching. The relationship is a complex one. In literature, for example, translators were, in fact, editors, covertly "improving" the original native work and shaping the text for foreign publisher and audience. Take Kawabata Yasunari, Junichiro Tanizaki, or even Oe Kenzaburo. Edward Seidensticker quietly emends Kawabata's *Snow Country* and Tanizaki's *Sasameyuki*, while John Nathan condenses Oe's long shosetsu *Atarashi Hito yo Mezameyo* and prints it as a short story with no warning whatever. The authors do not protest the textual abuses. Are English translators of Japanese literature in such short supply that they cannot be challenged? Among historians, Bolitho, again inadvertently, makes the best case when he consolingly concludes his essay in reassuring his congregation of the paradise of paraphrase by pointing to Japanese scholars who will guide the way from theory to real history.

American education has not freed itself from the ideology of a Cold War narrative. There is good reason for this because the Cold War can best be understood as a continuation of capitalism/imperialism that still goes on in the guise of neoliberalism and globalization. It takes various forms such as poststructuralism, cultural studies, and postmodernism, even though it has tried appropriation in the manner of the classic Orientalist tradition. The newer cultural studies has shown greater openness and less commitment to maintaining rigid disciplinary boundaries, and has manifested a greater tolerance for new theoretical strategies. But it has, like the older area studies, often reproduced the same concern for difference (for different reasons), as area studies emphasized cultural uniqueness in its holistic representation of a national society. In this regard, the two have converged to overdetermine the sense of difference and its culturalist dimensions, despite the disclaimers of cultural studies that it seeks to avoid holistic representations. Moreover, they are both still rooted in a culturalism required by the privilege accorded to the organization of area studies, because it was constructed on the principle of the national state.

Here one ought to recall Bill Readings in his observation that culture, separated from the nation-state, is meaningless. The older area studies have failed to take seriously the challenge leveled at it by Edward Said's *Orientalism* to consider the relationship between hegemonic knowledge of an area and colonial power. The newer cultural studies have not always adequately interrogated the relationship of knowledge/power, despite its promise to do so. In its inordinate reliance on the politics of identity, and the ways difference is supposed to empower, it has risked ignoring the genuine political economic conditions that produce relationships of inequity and injustice that such appeals to difference fail to mask. To paraphrase Janis Joplin, difference is all there is when you have nothing else to lose. Too often the enunciation of cultural difference, as we see in current postcolonial studies, slides sadly into claims of authenticity that often mimic the privilege area studies accorded to native knowledge. The circulation of theories of multiculturalism, like the older multidisciplinarism associated with area studies, is little more than a rearticulation of pluralism and the myth of consensus that had been the principal vocation of American studies.

Despite the concentration of these papers on the formation and practice of area studies in the United States, and the changes introduced by postcolonial and cultural studies, especially the attention paid to identity politics, this collection tries to point to the more general problem in higher education and the incapacity of college and university curricula to break free from the Cold War narrative. This does not mean inviting institutions of higher learning to rush enthusiastically to embrace new intellectual agendas signifying either multiculturalism or globalization. These newer perspectives merely reinforce the post-Cold War structure of power, as surely as area studies reinforced the claims of the national security state in the preceding decades. Declarations of globalization and transnationality in business and culture merely disclose that the unit of the nation-state, which had been the focus of the older area studies, is being replaced by larger units such as the globe itself as the proper and supposedly borderless context for business and multicultural identities. What certain scholars such as Homi Bhabha have proposed as a respect for cultural rights, is simply a way of reinforcing capitalism's own desire to undermine fixed subjectivities for producing new ones in order to expand consumption. These papers try to demonstrate the ways area studies and by extension the established disciplinary organization in colleges and universities have been able to maintain their privileged place in pedagogy long after the conditions that had required such resources and arrangements have disappeared. As long as globalization is enabled only by distributive inequity, the site of learning must be particularized to fit the

variegated conditions of a specific site. History and geography can never be dislodged from a specific site, although they need to be constantly referred to the forces that drive the whole world, the totality of human existence.

If the papers collected in this volume share a common perspective it is the conviction that it is no longer possible to envisage area studies as a form privileged to structure our knowledge of the world outside of Euro-America. In fact, it is precisely the impossibility of this form and the claims of an unproblematic status, leading, as we have seen, to the reduction of all accounts of itself to mere bibliography, that attests to a unified purpose linking the papers collected in this volume. All of them have been written under the critical sign that acknowledges that the world we now live in has already exceeded the original horizon of area studies programs and that we must begin the labor of reconstituting strategies to securing knowledges of regions of the world that are no longer the outside of Euro-America. Such a task can no longer claim unity, as did the older practices of area studies programs, or even an approach that reduces a region to a cultural whole in time and space. But it is possible to recognize that we now inhabit the space of an "afterlife," as Benjamin once advised, that requires totalizing our relationship to what came before in order to move beyond it. What we mean by referring to the afterlife of area studies is a perspective that has surpassed the older global divisions inaugurated after World War II that informed the organization of knowledge and teaching of regions of the world outside Euro-America but considered essential in the Cold War struggle with the Soviet Union. Just as the older empires moved toward decolonization and a new global order installed after World War II, so we must consider a world no longer dominated by the requirements of the Cold War. It is important, moreover, to factor into this new equation both the logic of global capitalism, which is still misrecognized as modernity, and the Saidian perception that because imperialism once connected much of the world in an integrated network, it is no longer possible to consign the formerly non-West to the borders of Euro-America and its horizon of consciousness.

The afterlife thus refers to the moment that has decentered the truths, practices, and even institutions that belonged to a time that could still believe in the identity of some conception of humanity and universality with a Eurocentric endowment and to the acknowledgment that its "provinciality" must now be succeeded by what Said called "a contrapuntal orientation in history." The former is amply demonstrated in the lead article by Masao Miyoshi, who demonstrates the process by which institutions of higher learning have become committed to the pursuit of intellectual property and the simultaneous bankruptcy of the humanities and its failure to envisage a project of critique and intervention. While the humanistic disciplines have sought to reconstitute their borders to make crossings easier, they have achieved nothing more in the way of critically contesting the new role played by the universities in a corporate role than to confirm students in a menu of subjective identities emphasizing a plurality of differences. In the case of the latter we have both the subject of Tetsuo Najita's meditations on the eighteenth-century Japanese thinker Andō Shōeki and Stefan Tanaka's examination of how Marxist historians in Japan sought, after the war, to imagine a new kind of global history that might in fact satisfy the requirements of a genuine contrapuntal history but which subsequently was aborted by Japan's own Cold War commitments.

In this time of the afterlife, we no longer need to worry about older divisions that had marked the practice of area studies programs, such as premodern/tradition and modern since it is precisely the modern that has become the tradition that must be grasped "contrapuntually." Since the received disciplines have been put into question, we are able to turn to subunits and new combinations that seek to represent the world of decolonization and what we now refer broadly to as the postcolonial moment—ethnic studies and cultural studies. This is the purpose of Rey Chow's article, which examines why those who were at the forefront of theory in literary studies twenty years ago are the most determined opponents of cultural studies. Benita Parry exposes current postcolonial theory's desire to present the "colonial archive" as the place for negotiation. According to her, it is simply a fiction of textual idealism that dramatizes the need for a more historical and materialistically informed approach. And H. D. Harootunian explores how area studies in the United States constituted a prehistory to postcolonial discourse and how it failed to respond to the challenge put to it by Edward Said, which was subsequently taken up by students of English literature.

With ethnic studies, Sylvia Yanagisako traces the boundary between Asian studies and Asian American studies to antecedents in American studies and cultural theory. The purpose of this complex retracing is to show that the "redundant narrative of Asian American history" is transcoded into a history of racist domination and masculinist opposition that only "reinforces the received boundary between Asian Studies and Asian American Studies." In this regard, Richard Okada explores how the efforts to locate ethnicity in American universities and colleges is inevitably yoked to the problem of placement that has haunted area studies. Like Yanagisako, Okada also sees how activism in the service of unformulated political goals leads back to reinforcing the status quo. If ethnic studies in part derives from American studies, American studies, according to Paul Bové, has never functioned to promote the interests of the American state in the way area studies was inaugurated explicitly for this purpose.

Rather, American studies, much like the newer ethnic studies it has generated, "best serves the interests of the nation-state in terms of hegemony and culture rather than policy." Rob Wilson hybridizes American studies by envisaging a new critical space called Asia-Pacific. But in contrast to American studies the new Asia-Pacific paradigm is really an extension of America into the Pacific and a reaffirmation of the utopia of a free-market space that is inscribed in the older model.

Moreover, the new perspective discounts the earlier claims associated with area studies to present a culture holistically. It eschews explicit theorization as it subjects the facticity of native experience to unarticulated theoretical assumptions derived from the social sciences. The provinciality of culturally specific claims of universalism now demands the engagement with theory—as Chow and Harootunian advocate—that must, in some way, account for both the failings of the older approach and disclose newer integrative principles while at the same time considering the importance of the "universality" of the tradition of the modern and coexistence of contrapuntal relationships. Bruce Cumings puts into question the troubled relationship between area studies and social science, and the clash of claims between an idiographic approach that privileges storytelling and model building and the fixation with general laws. Despite the social science dismissal of area studies because of theoretical deficiencies that rely on a historical and ethnographic approach, he demonstrates the utter bankruptcy of rational choice model building (if not its unintelligibility and autoreferentiality) by showing how it fails precisely because, as Adorno observed elsewhere, theory can never be more elegant and orderly than the reality it seeks to explain. The putative "robustness" of a model can never match the totality of a reality marked by inexhaustible contingencies and accidents of history and the apparent appeal to "rigor" and fullness is simply a rhetorical device to conceal the mode's mere dubious heuristic purpose. It is almost as if the purveyors of a noetic social science are so embarrassed by the messiness of reality and its regime of endless contingency that they must devise models that seek order where there is only disorder.

We need not dwell on the political consequences of this form of "science" that, according to Bernard Silberman, is invariably conservative. In the end the insights supplied by an ethnographic methodology are not only more valuable than the non sequiturs of rational-choice economists and political scientists more concerned with the mathematical form of their approaches than the content it wishes to represent and reduce but also its capacity to integrate "areas" into a theoretically informed American intellectual agenda that "is considerably more advanced than the modal type of inquiry in . . . social science, which remains wedded to an obsolescent model how people do their work in the so-called hard sciences." Cumings advises the acceptance of an approach based on knowing one's native land in order to rescue the "unseen" from the recent past before we move into uncharted foreign territory. It is precisely this tack that characterizes Moss Roberts's effort to reread an unfamiliar American past that still remains repressed in contemporary accounts of the Vietnam War that, nevertheless, structured relations with Asia and which must be considered for any adequate understanding of the period of the war's consequences after 1975. Roberts's essay aims to show how a grounding in the specific and concrete history of American-Asian relations over a longer duration is invariably forgotten in both the assessments of principal actors like Robert McNamara, who formulated policy, and newspapers, always hurriedly managing to eliminate history and promote forgetfulness in the interest of the repetitively familiar. But his analysis also reveals how news coverage consistently fails to betray its informing hermeneutic that transmutes the violence of American foreign policy into the instances of morality and humanitarianism.

If Cumings alerts us to the problem of social science in the understanding of "areas," Bernard Silberman specifies how different methodological agendas have been employed to represent Japan. Targeting the specific area of Japan in the United States, Silberman recognizes how in recent years the object of the field—Japan—is beginning to heave and dissolve as a result of retreating funds and new attacks from disciplines like political science. Silberman dissents from prevailing criticism by noting that whatever social science agenda is implemented, its enunciation of views concerning an area invariably disclose a political evaluation. "In the case of Japan," he writes, "the conflict is essentially over the negative and positive evaluation of what constitutes the main axis of Japan's capacity to sustain an integrated culture—one that can be an object of study." While he identifies two prevailing modes of study as "oversocialized" (culture) and "undersocialized" (rational choice) he reminds us that both conceptions are driven by a conservatism when considering the question of social change and uphold constraints on the individual. What is at stake is the preservation of disciplinary boundaries at the expense of area studies in the various social sciences precisely at the moment when the new cultural studies are calling for border crossings and realignments.

In the study of an area such as Japan, the more traditional social science disciplines have, as Silberman attests, junked the concept of the "field" by reinforcing disciplinary optics, whereas the "softer" disciplines like history, literature, and art history have, by and large, remained immune to the challenge of new interpretative strategies. Historians still continue to plow the field of social

history with the purpose of microscopic reconstruction. Students of literature write single-author studies seeking to disguise mere biographies, when not appealing to the stale promise of transparency once offered by translation. And art history is still mired in modes of authentication and traditional thematics. In this respect, James Fujii calls attention to how many in the study of Japanese literature continue "their work as if changes in worldly conditions and institutions they helped shape have no bearing on the work they produce." A few, like himself, have turned away from received disciplinary habits and constraints (the text-centered approach) to new intellectual contexts that focus on the logic of the commodity form and the role assumed by "global English" as arbiter of what now constitutes the "unbounded" and "nonhierarchic." He ponders how Japanese literary studies may actually find "a role to play in these contexts." By the same measure, Fujii looks to the precedents established by Japanese scholars like Maeda Ai in the 1970s and 1980s and the exemplarity and appropriateness of their efforts to envisage a cultural studies for our own practices rather than a slavish imitation of models devised exclusively in the Western academy. Mitsuhiro Yoshimoto explores the status of Japanese film studies as a new area of inquiry that was inaugurally housed in the study of literature but which early liberated itself to lead an autonomous but troubled nondisciplinary unbounded existence. Yet, as he observes, Japanese cinema has been, at the same time, instrumental in the formation of film studies in general and is thus inseparable from how it—film studies—has constituted itself as a discipline. Because the study of Japanese film has no clear institutional identity in a well-established discipline today, it has assumed a "free-floating status" that might be used to call into question the autonomy of disciplines. In a sense, Yoshimoto, like Fujii, offers a new perspective for the dissolved object of Japan as an area studies and a new way of reconstituting this "field" in "a postdisciplinary" age that will be "political," by which they mean a tactical intervention in the structures and practices of established disciplines that exceeds the specificity of either cinema or literature, as such. Only in this sense will it be possible to reimagine the true shape of "area studies" as an afterimage that is fully consonant with the vast institutional changes we have undergone in a global age that no longer has any need to be tethered by the identities the older disciplines insist on affirming.

Ivory Tower in Escrow

Masao Miyoshi

Higher education is undergoing a rapid sea change. Everyone knows and senses it, but few try to comprehend its scope or imagine its future. This two-part essay makes some guesses by observing recent events and recalling the bygone past. In the first part I describe the quickening conversion of learning into intellectual property and of the university into the global corporation in today's research universities in the United States—and, increasingly, everywhere else. Part 2 puzzles over the failure of the humanities at this moment as a supposed agency of criticism and intervention.

The Conversion of Learning into Intellectual Property

Richard C. Atkinson, the president of the University of California since 1995, has repeatedly sought to identify the role of the world's largest research university. As he sees it, the goal of today's research university is to build an alliance with industries: "The program works like this. A UC researcher joins with a scientist or engineer from a private company to develop a research proposal. A panel of experts drawn from industry and academia selects the best projects for funding."[1] Thus, although university research encompasses "basic research, applied research, and development," basic research, now called "curiosity research . . . driven by a sheer interest in the phenomena," is justified only because "it may reach the stage where there is potential for application and accordingly a need for applied research."[2] Development—that is, industrial utility—is the principal objective of the research university.

In another short essay titled "Universities and the Knowledge-Based Economy," Atkinson remarks that "universities like Cambridge University and other European universities almost all take the view that university research should be divorced from any contact with the private sector." In contrast to this