

INTRODUCTION

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At the end of World War II, Japanese studies in the United States did not yet exist as a recognized area of study. Few universities offered instruction in the Japanese language, and fewer still offered more than a handful of courses on Japanese history, society, or culture. The available courses were frequently taught by non-specialists unable to read Japanese. Over the postwar decades, Japanese studies has developed markedly, so that now virtually all the country's major research universities, most of the state universities, and hundreds of private colleges and universities provide courses of study on Japan. The story of building the field's institutional infrastructure has been told in a number of important volumes.¹ While some of these also addressed the scholarly issues that defined research on Japan at the time of their compilation, or have assessed the "state of the field" in various disciplines from time to time, none to date has examined in detail the postwar development of scholarship across the spectrum of disciplines in which Japanese studies has become established.

This volume documents the postwar history of United States scholarship on Japan by presenting essays chronicling its historical development in each discipline or significant subfield, and reflecting upon the continuing task of strengthening the field's impact within the disciplines. Its separate essays put current debates in historical perspective and provide useful bibliographies. This volume should help to assess the field's achievements throughout the disciplines, to identify areas requiring more work, and to chart a direction for the future.

The essays in this volume suggest that Japanese studies in the United States has developed since 1945 in relation to several factors: social and political change in Japan and in the United States,

¹ See the following: Yasaka Takagi (1935); Social Science Research Council-American Council of Learned Societies Joint Committee on Japanese Studies (1970); Elizabeth T. Massey and Joseph A. Massey (1977); The Japan Foundation (1984, 1988); The Japan Foundation and the Association for Asian Studies (1996).

changes in the dominant scholarly concerns about Japan, and changing evaluations of area studies. This introduction provides a synthesis of this volume's findings, followed by an overview of the separate essays.

The period 1945 to 1960 saw the establishment of Japanese studies in the major research universities, staffed by a generation of scholars who had participated in World War II or the Allied Occupation of Japan after the war, often either raised in Japan or having their first instruction in Japanese language as part of their military experience. This generation of scholars cooperated closely with one another to promote the study of Japan, to build research library collections, and to create programs of undergraduate and graduate study. They set high standards of linguistic competence and encouraged their students to become widely read in all areas of Japanese history, culture, and society. At the time, the annual volume of publications on Japan was still small enough that one could realistically expect to read it all.

A subtext to the establishment of Japanese studies after World War II was the general ignorance about Japan in the United States and the continuing existence of racist attitudes toward Japan, an inevitable, ugly legacy of the war. There was a need to address these attitudes in order to establish the legitimacy of the study of Japan. The way found, probably not with conscious intention, was the creation of exotic, essentialized images of Japan and the Japanese people. Such wartime studies as Benedict's *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* had identified a psychological profile supposedly valid for all Japanese in all times, a monolithic, stereotypical portrait which would sort out the essential differences between Japan and the West. The framework was implicitly comparative and straightforwardly essentialist. The circumstances of its undertaking were defined by the needs of military intelligence. Translations of literature emerging soon after the war dovetailed with Benedict's emphasis, stressing ahistorical, apolitical images of Japan rather than representing a cross-section of the actual literary world after World War II, which was riven with division, desperate to confront the question of war responsibility, and struggling to discern religious meaning in the tragedy of the atomic bombings. Zen emerged to epitomize popular American images of the entire culture of Japan. These various images combined to produce an exotic, aesthetically pleasing—even tantalizing, fascinating—counter to war-

time attitudes, making it clear that Japan offered something eminently worthy of study, showing a cultural sophistication equal to the standards of Western history and culture.

Even in the social sciences, the study of Japan had a strong humanistic emphasis, and training in Japanese studies was assumed to necessitate broad knowledge of language, culture, history, and society. In the main, Japanese studies emphasized empirical scholarship, with correspondingly less stress upon conceptual or theoretical innovation. Perhaps because so many areas were and remain relatively unexplored, there was and is much excitement to be gained in empirical research, collecting and translating primary sources. This empirical emphasis has been affirmed by the general thrust of most scholarship in Japan as well.

It is well understood in Japanese studies that empirical scholarship is guided by a theoretical framework even if, in the worst case, it remains unexamined or unacknowledged. Similarly, it is understood that it is false to posit even the possibility of a complete disjuncture between empirical scholarship and the development and refinement of theory. Of the two, however, there is little question that most weight has been assigned to empirical work in the postwar history of Japanese studies. A similar pattern would probably be found in the history of area studies of any kind.

During the 1960s and 1970s, the belief arose that much of the value in studying Japan lay not in any additive contribution to Western theories, but, rather, precisely in pointing out either the impossibility of applying such theories to Japan, or putting Japan forward as "the exception that proves the rule." It was in this context that Japan's experience was principally interesting to modernization theorists other than Japan specialists.

For most of the postwar decades, modernization has provided the major framework for the study of Japan, establishing an enduring line of scholarship. The history of Japan since the Meiji Restoration of 1868 was conceptualized as the period of Japan's modernization, a century or so in which Japan was transformed from a premodern or "feudal" agricultural country to a modern, industrialized, urbanized society. In the process, political forms developed from an autocratic regime, with militaristic and imperialistic phases, to a democratic nation after 1945. The Japanese people were transformed by the experiences of compulsory education and political participation, and the previous regionalism

was transcended in the development of a unified nation. Whereas these changes took centuries in the West, they were accomplished in about a century in Japan. Japan seemed to have achieved the social and political changes associated with modernization in a fraction of the time required in the West, with a minimum of social dislocation. How Japan accomplished such a monumental and thoroughgoing change in so short a time was a question that inspired many scholars of Japan since 1945 and pervasively influenced the entire field.

The question of Japan's modernization could be addressed in virtually any area of scholarship, from history to religion. Even in premodern fields, prior historical eras were examined to identify precursors or preparatory factors later facilitating modernization. Seeing Japan through the prism of modernization provided many opportunities for comparative scholarship and undoubtedly did much to bring Japan's relevance to the attention of the scholarly world as a whole. The pervasive influence of the modernization perspective also provided a unifying force within Japanese studies, even as each area of study became increasingly specialized.

In examinations of modernization around the globe, Japan specialists could enjoy the role of "spoiler" in theoretical discussions, usually able to show that, "Japan doesn't fit." From the standpoint of the disciplines, Japan was an interesting, odd "case," the source of endless puzzles, but rarely was it recognized as providing conceptual or theoretical innovation in its own right.

Through the 1960s and much of the 1970s, modernization was the major preoccupation of Japanese studies, and it remains highly influential. No alternative perspective of comparable power to connect Japan to other areas of academic inquiry has yet emerged, nor do subsequent paradigms show a comparable power to unite Japanese studies as a field.

In the 1980s, interest in pursuing studies of modernization was replaced by a variety of other theoretical frameworks. Not all of these derived from a critique of modernization, though as the influence of social and cultural history has grown in the American academy generally, many doubts have been raised about just how "painless" Japan's transition to modernity was. A natural sequel to such suspicions was the desire to study non-elite groups, for whom the transition to modernity was anything but painless. Structuralism, poststructuralism, deconstructionism, postmoder-

nism, and rational choice theory have all found proponents in Japanese studies. The waxing and waning of these theoretical paradigms within Japanese studies' various fields follow diverse patterns, as this volume's essays demonstrate.

Concurrently, Japanese studies in each discipline became increasingly specialized, following a general pattern in the American academy. Graduate training was lengthened, making it possible for students to receive more advanced disciplinary training as well as requiring of them increasingly higher levels of competence in Japanese language and deeper knowledge of their particular subject within Japanese studies. Diverse attitudes towards the relative significance of theoretical and empirical work developed, sometimes a resignation in the face of short-lived theoretical movements, or even the suspicion that those who became caught up in them have done so in order to camouflage a weakness in their empirical knowledge of Japan or to mask a deficit in language skills.

Critiques of area studies based on the idea that they are inherently "Orientalist" began to make an impact on Asian studies as a whole, and on Japanese studies in particular during the 1980s. This is the view, originating with Edward Said, that the exotic images typical of Victorian scholarship on the Middle East produced an understanding of other societies as static, uncivilized backwaters requiring the adoption of Western reforms. "Oriental" in fact was equated with this benighted state. Not limited to studies of the Middle East, the critique of Orientalism found exponents in Japanese studies as well. As the authors of this volume's essays describe the situation, many early studies of Japan in fact incorporated the assumptions of the Orientalist perspective, misguidedly perpetuating an implicit binarism, a tacitly comparative perspective tending to caricature Japan. The charge laid by this critique was a call for a thorough re-examination of basic presuppositions. One such presupposition was that it would be "good" for Japan to become more like the West.

Postmodernism incorporates and extends critiques of area studies based on Orientalism. It goes without saying that postmodernism emphasizes different ideas in different disciplines. It is not a simple matter to summarize its main points as they have affected the study of Japan. Nevertheless, at the risk of being overly general, we can say that postmodernism prescribes attention to relations

of power, examination of the periphery as well as the center, non-elite groups instead of a single focus on social elites. The essays of this volume suggest that postmodernism's appeal within Japanese studies shows a generational pattern, such that many younger scholars find it constructive and illuminating, whereas their elders typically find it undermining and inimical.

The 1980s advent of postmodernism revealed divisions in the field. The modernization perspective, which had functioned to unify Japanese studies up until the late 1970s, ceased to provide such a unifying focus. Furthermore, the field was growing in size and diversity. The level of specialization expected in the disciplines was rising to the point that it was not always easy for, say, a political scientist of Japan to understand and appreciate the efforts of literary scholars, and vice versa. Japanese studies in the disciplines of economics and linguistics became so technical that other Japan specialists could scarcely claim to comprehend their aims and methods.

The Occupation generation of Japan scholars had succeeded so well in creating support for Japanese studies that their students were emerging with different skills than their teachers. Those beginning their academic careers in the 1980s had been better funded as graduate students, and they had had the opportunity to study language (often with government grant support) for much longer than their predecessors, under more professional teachers, using better texts, and held to a higher standard. They were able to study in Japan for longer periods, and to develop extensive contacts with Japanese scholars. As a result, they took their first teaching positions not in their late twenties, but in their early or mid-thirties.

Although their undergraduate years coincided with the Vietnam War, almost none had military experience, though many had the experience of civil disobedience in opposition to that war or in the context of the civil rights or feminist movements. Almost no one was in sympathy with the proposition that area studies could or should contribute to intelligence work. Their experience channelled them toward iconoclasm and attracted them to the debunking potential of new theoretical writings. They did not shy from the parricidal potential of the Orientalism debate, postmodernism, and rational choice theory. In their scholarship they were less respectful of Japanese society's taboos on unwelcome topics

(discrimination against women, the Burakumin, or studies of the imperial house, crime, minorities, etc.).

Those in the social sciences were trained in advanced theoretical and statistical methods. There were more outlets for publications, and, in part because they were also members of the “baby boom” generation, higher expectations of publication were imposed on their decisions for academic tenure. They faced little competition from European or British scholarship on Japan, and indeed, European and British scholars, foreseeing the decline of their own university systems, came to this country in significant numbers.

With the end of the Cold War, a variety of dissonant images of Japan has proliferated to replace exotic, essentialized portraits. Japan is no longer the “younger brother” to be instructed (an attitude lasting into the 1970s), nor does anyone expect it to become the next world hegemon (a much-feared scenario of the 1980s). Current theoretical debate in Japanese studies centers on postmodernism in the humanities and on rational choice theory in the social sciences, with no over-arching, unifying perspective yet having arisen to replace the modernization framework. There is much interest in comparative scholarship, and postmodernism offers some scope to comparative work. Similarly, the resurgence of a pan-Asian perspective in public discourse within Japan itself has led to renewed interest among Japanese scholars in comparative scholarship. Japanese studies’ increasing specialization within the disciplines in United States universities is a mark of its increasing sophistication and acceptance, even as specialization and professionalization make it unlikely that a single perspective could emerge to capture the attention of the whole field again.

This volume’s essays were written between 1994 and 1997, just as implications for area studies of all kinds of the end of the Cold War were being debated. One long-standing criticism of area studies held that they were originally sponsored in order to assist government and military intelligence operations and hence lack academic independence and integrity. On this view, levelled most pointedly at Southeast Asian studies and Soviet studies, the end of the Cold War should signal the end of a need for area studies. From a different perspective, however, it is argued that “globalization” and the increasing economic integration of nations produce a much-increased need for deep understanding of the history, so-

ciety, language, and culture of other nations, underlining the continued, even increased need for sophisticated area studies.

With these debates about the meaning of the end of the Cold War for area studies forming the geopolitical background, academic scholarship both inside and outside area studies has been swept by currents of theoretical debate which would seem to undermine the value of area studies education, which stresses extensive language work and broad, detailed understanding of other nations' history, society, and culture. These debates are allied with postmodernism in the humanities and with rational choice theory in the social sciences.

It should be pointed out, however, that some areas of Japanese studies are still struggling to achieve a "critical mass" of scholars and distinct lines of cumulative research (law, pre-1600 history) and are thus not uniformly affected by these theoretical currents. Japanese studies of anthropology, nominally a social science, has developed much like a humanities discipline. While anthropological studies of Japan have been much affected by postmodernism, rational choice theory has not made a significant impact. It must also be noted that Japanese studies has never really become established in academic departments of psychology, and that it has declined conspicuously in sociology and economics, with the result that neither sociology, economics, nor psychology is addressed in this volume's essays. It is also worthy of note that in such areas of Japanese studies as Restoration history, foreign relations, and religion, the existence of parallel lines of scholarship in the United States and Japan has produced research trajectories incorporating a variety of theoretical debates, without producing any sense that studies of Japan are incongruent with disciplinary expectations in the United States.

Rational choice theory challenges all area studies through its claim that humanity everywhere obeys unitary rules of human behavior, implying that more specific considerations of particular histories, societies, and cultures are merely epiphenomena of no determinative value. In other words, it might be "nice" to know precisely how, say, Japanese politicians, bureaucrats, and corporations maintain their relationships through "gift-giving," socializing on the golf course, and carousing in nightclubs, but we can achieve a much more accurate understanding of how political corruption operates in Japan through the application to the situ-

ation of universal rules having nothing to do with Japan. These rules would emphasize the estimation of economic advantage and other factors at a trans-cultural level. In other words, theory-making can and should be "content-free." Local knowledge on this view becomes almost an obstacle to understanding rather than a precondition of it. The discipline most affected by the rational choice perspective is political science, and some areas within modern history. Rational choice has few outright proponents in Japanese studies, but this volume's essays suggest that, at least among younger scholars, there is a growing interest and a belief that it must be addressed straightforwardly.

Japanese studies in the United States today is a large and flourishing area of scholarship, contributing strongly to global research on Japan, fully established in the humanities and in most social sciences disciplines of American universities. By comparison with other branches of area studies, Japanese studies has developed steadily and expanded without major setbacks since 1945. The great outpouring of scholarship on Japan, far beyond the capacity of a single scholar even to monitor, let alone read and digest, testifies to the vitality of the field and to its record of cumulative scholarship throughout the disciplines.

Yet when seen from the perspective of the influence of Japanese studies within separate disciplines or subfields, many scholars would say that it has yet to achieve its full potential, that the broader significance of insights gained in the study of Japan is too seldom recognized by those outside Japanese studies, and that scholars of Japan have hardly ever succeeded in altering the Eurocentric perspectives which prevail in most disciplines. In other words, Japanese studies' quantitative and institutional growth has not been matched by a corresponding theoretical impact, in the view of some scholars.

Nevertheless, other factors have emerged to mitigate this situation, not all of them of a scholarly nature. With the advance of "globalization," convergences between Japanese and Western society have become apparent. Much like American young people, Japanese youth are currently fascinated by questions of personal identity and the potential for recreation, personal transformation, and social change to be found in religion, pop culture, and technology. Current literature displays similar themes. There is little idealization of tradition, no essential self, and no firm barrier

between humanity and the technology it creates. In this situation, it is hardly to be expected that anyone could seriously entertain the idea of a monolithic national essence. National boundaries have become less relevant, and this means that it is more difficult to sustain thoroughgoing distinctions of cultural boundaries, and that it is more appealing to place the study of Japan within a global-comparative or at least pan-Asian context. Though the connections are indistinct and indirect, the concerns of contemporary culture thus seem to echo the postmodern or rational choice perspectives of the rising generations of scholars of Japan.

Overview of the Essays in This Volume

This volume is based on the Twenty-fifth Anniversary Symposium of the Edwin O. Reischauer Institute of Japanese Studies, Harvard University, a series of lectures during 1996 and 1997 in which the authors of this volume's essays presented their work before an audience of scholars and students of Japan at Harvard. The authors themselves were largely drawn from Harvard (Bolitho, Craig, Gordon, Hardacre, Iriye, Rosenfield), along with others representing significant centers of Japanese studies in the United States: Calder/ Princeton University; Collcutt/ Princeton University; Dower/ Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Field/ The University of Chicago; Robertson/ University of Michigan; Upham/ New York University. The lectures were later revised for inclusion in this volume.²

Scholarship by Japanese studies' specialists has contributed to virtually all the disciplines of the humanities and social sciences, and this volume attempts to reflect and to explore the full range

² Founded in 1973 as the Japan Institute and renamed in 1985 in honor of its founder, the Reischauer Institute exists to expand and strengthen Japanese studies at Harvard and throughout the international community of scholars of Japan. To that end, it sponsors academic research, the publication of monographs on Japan, fellowship programs, the establishment of professorships, and cultural events relating to Japan, while encouraging communication, cooperation, and understanding between the United States and Japan. It strives to provide the pre-eminent locus for Japanese studies in the United States and the Western world. Previous Institute publications documenting the history and present state of Japanese studies include those by Deptula and Hess (1996) and Hardacre and Kern, eds. (1997).

of that contribution. Historical studies of Japan today encompass a very wide expanse of humanistic scholarship, with important links to other disciplines, and historical study provides the conceptual framework for most areas of the study of Japan. In recognition of the central importance of history within Japanese studies, this volume devotes several studies to it, including a comprehensive survey of postwar historical scholarship on Japan (Dower), studies of diplomatic history (Iriye), art history (Rosenfield), and religious history (Hardacre), and separate essays on prehistory and ancient Japan (Collcutt), the Edo Period (Bolitho), and the Meiji Restoration (Craig). This volume also addresses Japanese studies within anthropology (Robertson), literary studies (Field), law (Upham), and political science (Calder). The volume's final essay discusses the situation of Japanese studies within contemporary debates on the post-Cold War future of area studies (Gordon).

John Dower addresses the larger political context of postwar historical studies of Japan, showing how the character of political relations between the United States and Japan has continually colored evaluations of Japanese history. Modernization theory applied to Japan resulted in a sweeping revision of earlier assessments of premodern history, especially, casting out earlier views of the Tokugawa period as "feudal," in favor of upbeat portrayals of it as progressing inexorably toward modernity and "free enterprise." This emphasis on the convergence of Japanese and Western historical trajectories was displaced in the 1980s, however, with the retreat of modernization theory and Japan's emergence as a challenge to Western economic hegemony. "Divergence" rather than convergence seemed to provide a more convincing explanatory framework. Dower holds that the new emphasis on divergence ironically harks back to outlooks prevailing before modernization theory's vogue, but with the significant difference that in important areas of study, "Japan's departures from the Western norm often are evaluated positively." In fact, scholars like Ronald Dore and Ezra Vogel proclaimed that the West had much to learn from Japan. Subsequent to that development, however, came a new approach to modern Japanese culture showing how much of Japanese "tradition" in fact is "socially constructed, ideologically charged, and part of a constant process of invention and reinvention." Attention to social construction focused on social division

and conflict, virtually for the first time in Japanese studies, and since the mid-1970s this perspective has steadily gained strength and momentum. Thus, modernization theory seems now to have been decisively displaced by a “postmodern” perspective of multiple causalities and sources of power.

Martin Collcutt’s treatment of the study of prehistory, ancient, and medieval Japan engages an area of scholarship in which interaction between Western and Japanese scholarship has been a sustained feature of the postwar decades. Prehistory and the ancient period are known in large part through the work of archaeologists, and while this field is “extremely active and well-funded” in Japan, Western archaeologists of Japan have always been a very small group, tending to fall between the stools of history and anthropology. As Collcutt shows, the development of archaeological scholarship on Japanese prehistory and the ancient period has been slow to develop. As a consequence, our understanding of early Japanese history is limited in many respects. Nevertheless, recent finds have significantly revised received knowledge on several important topics. For example, the earliest human habitation of the islands has been pushed back by finds at Kami Takamori (Miyagi Prefecture) to 600,000 B.C. Excavations at Sannai Maruyama (Aomori Prefecture) reveal a much more complex society during the Jōmon Period than was understood only a few years ago: village “long houses,” separate burial sites for children and adults, and evidence that this site was part of a large trading network in obsidian, encompassing northern Honshū and Hokkaidō. Also, Yoshinogari (Saga Prefecture) has emerged as the leading contender for the Yamatai capital of Queen Himiko. Collcutt documents ongoing debate on the nature of ancient contact between Japan and the Korean peninsula, beginning with Egami Namio’s “Horserider Thesis.” However these debates are resolved, it is now indisputable that “Japan’s early history cannot be understood in isolation from that of the rest of Asia and especially the Korean peninsula.” It remains the case, nevertheless, that studies of ancient Japan have yet to muster a “critical mass” outside Japan itself. By contrast, studies of medieval history have flourished in recent years, stimulated by the field’s ongoing revival in Japan, the so-called “*chūsei* boom.” While many important topics remain unexplored, there are clear lines of interpretation for the

period's overall historical development, with a vigorous group of scholars.

In his discussion of historical studies of the Tokugawa period, Harold Bolitho shows how assessments of the period have changed radically since 1945. At the end of World War II, both Japanese and Western scholarship agreed in the view that the period was a static and alien one, with little that could withstand comparison to Western history of the same era. As he describes the situation, the period was mostly viewed as "Other," remote from modern concerns and largely antithetical to them. However, as the modernization paradigm took shape, a new generation of scholars looked to the Tokugawa period for the antecedents of Japan's modernization, for the templates that made possible its transition to modernity. This emphasis produced more favorable assessments of the period. This optimistic trend has been continued, in part, by a cohort of scholars writing during the 1970s and 1980s, which wishes in addition to examine the dispersion of power from the center to the periphery, the variety of society and culture. This latter inquiry has tended to undercut earlier images of Tokugawa period society and culture as monolithic and static. In Bolitho's view, while these studies of sociocultural variety and resistance to authority may serve the intellectual agenda of postmodernism, the result is to re-enforce the view of the period as "Other," if a more likeable and approachable one. This contemporary impetus also fails, in Bolitho's opinion, to engage the fundamental questions about economic and institutional change which would allow us to link the period more convincingly to the modern era.

Albert Craig's essay on the Meiji Restoration identifies a central question running through the history of studies of this complex event: how the Restoration's multi-faceted reforms could have been carried out so rapidly. To locate promising areas of study for answering that question, he engages three main topics of investigation: commoners and Restoration history, the Restoration movement, and the period's cultural revolution. Craig discusses significant scholarship on late Tokugawa rural society, beginning with the work of Hugh Borton and Thomas Smith and continued by scholars in the 1980s and 1990s. These studies agree on certain central points bearing on the Restoration: that Tokugawa period uprisings were rare, not indicative of permanent divisions, and that they were basically irrelevant to the Restoration. While

the rise of the market economy led to intensified social stratification, and while, for example, landlordism created severe tensions, society was highly stable, and this stability in rural society was the immediate backdrop to the Restoration. Unfortunately, Craig notes, as yet we have no study of urban society during the last days of the Tokugawa period, and it was in the cities that the major events of the Restoration occurred. As for the Restoration itself, there has been a consistent drive to refine our understanding of the many elements contributing to the whole: the role of foreign pressure, the roles of individual domains, the imperial house, the shogunate's demise, and biographical studies of the main actors. Nevertheless, a gap remains in our understanding of the economic history of the period 1850 to 1880. The general importance of cultural change is obvious, but no clear line of interpretation regarding the great diversity of thought during the period has yet emerged.

Akira Iriye's essay treats American studies of Japanese foreign relations. Iriye notes that American scholarship has dominated this field, probably because of the legacy of World War II. James William Morley made a great contribution through the translation of a major compilation of primary sources on the road to war, and he set his stamp on the field through the Hakone conference of 1960, inspiring a generation of younger historians. American students of Japan's foreign relations have worked so extensively in Japanese primary sources, and engage so closely with their Japanese colleagues that in this area we can see the emergence of a unified trajectory of scholarship. This integration is extremely stimulating for both sides. Americans are fortunate in avoiding the emotional politicization of discussion of Japanese imperialism to be seen, for example, in other East Asian contexts. Unfortunately, however, American studies of Japanese foreign relations have had little impact on the broader discipline of foreign relations, and studies of Japanese imperialism have not yet offered striking innovations. Nevertheless, recent discussions of the implications of culture for foreign relations may offer new opportunities to influence the discipline's future development.

John Rosenfield's study of Japanese art history shows that this area of scholarship has enjoyed rapid growth, but he also identifies significant areas of concern. Japanese arts played a crucial role in the evolution of Modern Art in Europe and America from 1850

until well into the postwar period. In this connection, Japanese arts were viewed as exciting alternatives to the formalism of European classicism. But when the perspective of modernism was superseded by postmodernism, a gap emerged in the nature of professional training and career expectations between specialists on Japan, on the one hand, and their disciplinary colleagues, on the other, for whom the theoretical perspective of postmodernism was becoming increasingly central. This gap occurred, paradoxically, because of the growing sophistication of training of American students in Japan, in which they were increasingly integrated into the academic lineages and traditions of art-historical training in Japan, which emphasizes minute, empirical description and technical specialization to a degree which would be understood in this country as hyper-developed, too concerned with tiny details ever to have a hope of producing theoretical insights. Furthermore, whereas the great corpus of Japanese Buddhist art offers endless opportunity for a researcher, the dominant attitude in the postmodernist perspective is anti-religious, according to Rosenfield, and thus hostile from the outset to the sort of insights likely to emerge from the study of this central sector of the arts of Japan. Concerned as postmodernism is with issues of colonialism, there is a suspicion among postmodernist scholars of art history that studies of Japan are Orientalist and distorted by colonialist attitudes. There is an impatience with the focus upon technique and with a well-established tradition of publishing exhibition catalogues instead of scholarly monographs, and pressure for art historians of Japan to make the leap more quickly from description to theoretical generalization. But these attitudes conflict with all that a young scholar is liable to be taught in Japan during the formative period of training. Seen in this light, there is a fundamental antagonism between the increasingly sophisticated training of the art historian of Japan and the paradigm currently enjoying hegemony in art history as a discipline. Rosenfield closes with the hope that the turbulent succession of theoretical fashions in America will not entirely destroy the expressive encounter and appreciation which must motivate commitment to the study of art history.

Hardacre's examination of the history of studies of Japanese religions shows a steady growth and diversification of this field. In terms of quantity, studies of Buddhism have far outnumbered studies of Shintō, Confucianism, Japanese Christianity, or other

sectors of religious life in Japan. Before the mid-1950s, most studies of Japanese Buddhism concerned the Pure Land or True Pure Land sects, but with the appearance in English of the works of D. T. Suzuki, along with Suzuki's personal influence among American scholars, there began a great outpouring of scholarship on Zen. The result is an imbalance between the development of Zen studies, in itself a highly positive thing, and the historical reality of Zen's existence as one among many, equally important traditions of Buddhism in Japan. For example, studies of the equally significant Tendai and Shingon schools number only a handful, and studies of the Pure Land tradition have languished badly. Likewise, there was a short while in the 1960s and 1970s when Zen was idealized as representing the essence of all Japanese religions, if not all Japanese culture, paralleling anthropological studies essentializing the Japanese people as fundamentally homogenous. Thankfully, that episode seems to be finally laid to rest. Similarly, it is only in the late 1980s and after that one sees significant studies of Shintō and shrine life, Confucianism, or Japanese Christianity, though a few biographical studies had earlier shown the way. Studies of the new religions parallel their growing social and political importance, engaging increasing numbers of younger scholars, and creating fruitful connections with scholars in Japan. Japanese studies of religion have achieved recognition within religious studies, especially in the areas of studies of religion and gender (where connections to studies of Christianity in the medieval period have been the locus for exciting interchange with scholars of medieval European Christianity), and religion and politics, where the larger relevance of the study of Shintō is well understood. Studies of Japanese Buddhism have much potential to influence Buddhist studies as a whole, not least because the academic study of Buddhism is better developed in Japan than anywhere else. Perhaps because the study of religion itself is inherently interdisciplinary, the sort of Eurocentrism and disciplinary chauvinism which marginalize studies of Japan in other areas can be straightforwardly interrogated and the tables turned.

Norma Field discusses the ways that studies of Japanese literature have mediated between the scholarly concerns of American and Japanese academics. The postwar study of Japanese literature was launched from 1945 to 1960 through the publication of translations of a small group of Japanese prose authors, mainly Tanizaki,

Kawabata, and Mishima, and translations of haiku also were found to appeal to Western readers. This selection gave rise to exotic, ahistorical images of the Japanese people, while tending to marginalize and ignore more politically engaged literature or literary scholarship. The lacuna created thereby meant that studies of Japanese literature in the United States privileged an image of Japanese literature as ahistorical and apolitical, in spite of the urgent concern in Japan itself to deal with the war, its aftermath, and a sense of literature's complicity.

From the late 1960s in Japan, the student movement produced the Monoken school of literary criticism, which appropriated postmodern theory in order to establish a break with the past and to interrogate the roles of power and politics within academic literary scholarship. Meanwhile, literary scholarship on Japan in the United States flourished from the 1960s, influenced greatly by Konishi's "Association and Progression" and reflected in the works of Earl Miner; a high standard for both formal and contextual analysis was established. Translations of premodern prose and poetic works continued, though these have been marked by qualities of disconnected miscellany and pedantry, except for studies of *The Tale of Genji*, which show a stronger rationale and cumulative character. Nowadays postmodern theory provides the dominant paradigm for literary scholars both in the United States and Japan, and it has led to a fruitful questioning of stale, binary frameworks insisting on discussing Japanese literature within a "West vs. non-West" model.

Jennifer Robertson's study of anthropological studies of Japan identifies a persistent binarism, an implicit comparison between Japan and the United States which has an important point of origin in the work of Ruth Benedict. Benedict's study, published as *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*, was based on interviews with Japanese and Japanese-Americans interned during World War II, and was quite self-consciously designed to assist the war effort against Japan. It compiled a unitary, static, and homogenous portrait of the Japanese people. For a time, Japan presented in this way occupied a central place in anthropological studies as a whole, but while that centrality has been displaced, the inherent binarism remains and even encourages essentializing, pseudo-academic studies of Japanese cultural identity in Japan itself, called *nihon-jinron*. Anthropologists of Japan have made a concerted effort to

introject the viewpoint from Japan to theoretical discussion, for example, at annual meetings of the American Anthropological Association. But while various papers on Japan may be presented in such settings, this effort has not yet produced an awareness of the potential of Japan as an area where theoretical innovation might be made. Instead, Japan anthropologists are not unlikely to be accused of whining that "Japan doesn't fit" the paradigms derived from the study of other areas. The received essentialized image of Japan as homogeneous and unitary seemingly must be unseated over and over again in a Sisyphean display, before attention can be directed to the questions of greater interest to specialists. Nevertheless, promising lines of research on gender and ethnic identity extend the possibility of destabilizing the older images and connecting more forcefully with other Western anthropological concerns regarding self-reflection and expurgation of the discipline's colonialist past.

Kent Calder surveys the history of the study of Japanese politics and the Japanese political system, identifying five trends in the postwar development of this field: methodological innovation, a growing emphasis on comparative studies, an increasing tendency to contention and vigorous debate, the emergence of new forms of scholarly dialogue, especially via the Internet, and an increasing integration of foreign and Japanese analyses. These trends have been accompanied by the emergence of problems for the field as well, such as a paucity of cumulative research (except in the area of political economy) and a declining quality of information made available to scholars, as debate about Japanese politics becomes increasingly politicized and implicated in the making of national government policy in the United States. The current emphasis on comparison and theory in graduate school training undermines an earlier priority upon achieving a broad and deep understanding of Japanese culture and history.

Early postwar analysis of Japan's politics and political system began as a humanistic inquiry, exemplified in the works of Maruyama Masao. On this model, area specialists strove to situate their analyses in a culturally and historically informed framework. It was fully accepted among political scientists of Japan, according to Calder, that "...[u]nderstanding the distinctive historical-institutional circumstances in which Japan entered the modern global economy is a crucial precondition" for understanding modern

Japanese politics. This humanistic or culturalist framework was linked to an optimistic perspective on Japan:

...The prevailing interpretation [of Japanese politics and Japan's political system] until the late 1980s typically neglected the darker side of Japanese politics and presented an optimistic view of Japan's capacity and propensity to change in ways congruent with American interests.

By contrast, until recently the field showed little interest in building and testing of hypotheses or other hallmarks of social science methodology. Perhaps because of this disinterest, Japanese political scientists are regarded in their discipline as having made few conceptual or theoretical innovations, though Japan specialists contributed a great deal to modernization theory. Quantitative studies have been rare, except in studies of elections.

More recently, however, Japanese political science finds itself facing a growing pressure to become more like the harder social sciences, and to distance itself from its earlier humanistic moorings. Political science as a whole is moving in this direction, and younger scholars, in particular, gravitate more to a comparative perspective than to one solely based in Japan. Thus political science studies on Japan are seen to become more "scientific" the less obvious is their grounding in a deep knowledge of culture and history. Rational choice theory's appearance in Japanese political analysis is the most important phenomenon fueling this current trend to "content-free theorizing." While the applicability and value of rational choice theory are furiously debated among Japan specialists, the perspective has begun to acquire "a critical mass of adherents." The appeal of rational choice theory is linked to a critical, rather pessimistic perspective on Japanese society, its politics and political system, or, at least, to a determination not to shy away from Japanese politics's "dark side."

Frank Upham examines the most recently developed area of Japanese studies, Japanese legal studies. Japanese and American legal scholars began a sustained collaboration after World War II, intended to result in the incorporation of Western legal principles to Japan's postwar legal system. Important conferences and publications in the 1950s sustained these connections. The University of Washington emerged as the most comprehensive program of Japanese legal studies, offering both J.D. and L.L.M. degrees, but Harvard has produced most of the scholars current-

ly teaching Japanese law in American universities today. The field of Japanese law has developed significantly since the 1970s, but even now there are only a dozen United States scholars of Japanese law able to utilize Japanese-language research materials.

Japanese legal studies has been closely connected with Japanese studies, exhibiting a commitment to area studies rare among scholars of comparative law. Japanese legal specialists highly value the area specialist's extensive training in history and culture and appreciate that the distinctiveness of Japanese law emerges from the country's history, society, and culture. But at the same time, "cultural" explanations of Japanese legal culture, mostly by non-specialists, have paradoxically created problems for the field. Japanese legal studies has had to struggle against Orientalizing, monolithic stereotypes about Japan and the Japanese people, to the effect that they are so dedicated to harmony and consensus, and so reluctant to enter litigation of any kind that law is essentially irrelevant to the study of Japan. Superficially informed "cultural explanations" are overly general, often inaccurate, and too frequently fail to establish any meaningful distinction between Japanese and American law. Not to put too fine a point on it, "the result sometimes verges on silliness," Upham writes, when cultural explanations are advanced as a substitute for an examination of institutional and social-structural similarities.

Japanese legal studies are unencumbered with debates on the relative merits of area studies and theory, a state of affairs arising from a combination of factors probably unique to legal education.

Despite their close relationship with Japanese studies, professors of Japanese law have not suffered from the tension between area studies and theory building that has plagued their colleagues in the social sciences. In the first place, legal education retains a professional as well as an academic function, and at even the most elite schools there are faculty who argue for an emphasis on teaching and practical training.

This volume's final essay by Andrew Gordon addresses the place of Japanese studies within contemporary debates on area studies. He notes that the current controversy is not new, but renews older arguments. In the social sciences, area studies have long tended to be subordinated to, and have had to struggle against disciplinary theories claiming universal relevance. The presupposition

of such debates is that, by comparison with a universal frame of reference, area studies can only produce partial, idiosyncratic data which at best serve as the basic material out of which theories are made. But this dichotomy is false, in Gordon's view. Theoretical knowledge is inseparable from area knowledge, and the data of some particular time and place are always, in practice, inevitably integrated with theory building.

If it could be shown that Japanese studies had never contributed concepts of broader theoretical relevance, then critiques of area studies might have some basis, but there are numerous examples of such contributions. For example, one might cite Thomas Smith's study of time and work discipline in Tokugawa Japan (which called into question E. P. Thompson's ideas about casual attitudes to time among all premodern peoples) or Takeshi Fujitani's study of the Japanese monarchy (which revises Foucault's concept of power) or Anne Allison's study of *manga* (which undermines Freudian interpretations of the male gaze). While these examples show how Japanese studies can identify useful revisions to established Western theoretical works, there are other examples of conceptual innovation which themselves give rise to universal-level theoretical debate, such as Chalmers Johnson's idea of the developmental state or Doi Takeo's concept of *amae*.

Taking Japanese studies seriously in this sense is a question of situating the enterprise of theorizing in the context of actual human behavior. The origins of the impasse between this perspective and rational choice theory can be seen to lie in that theory's assumption that theory can and should be "content-free." This most recent version of the bias against area studies is rooted in the political and cultural structure of academic life and is unlikely to change. Nevertheless, the expansion of the global economy is likely to produce more recognition of the depth of local particularism, though the specifics of any particular society should neither be marginalized nor romanticized.

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