

Globalizing American Studies

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Globalization expresses a new social reality hitherto not encountered by academic disciplines rooted in the nineteenth century reality. This postmodern phenomenon, Frederic Jameson believes, still remains "unclassifiable" though it affects every aspect of life—from culture, sociology, medicine and information to ecology and consumerism. Lacking a locus standi or a "privileged context", globalization constantly slips from one discipline to another, being appropriated by each and belonging to none.ⁱ Though the concept of globalization has been loosely defined it undeniably reflects a more comprehensive system of communication and flow of market that the world has known till now. Ronald Robertson in his book *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture* (1992) sees the dynamics of global expansion as "the twofold process of the particularization of the universal and the universalization of the particular."ⁱⁱ Living in a fragile and precarious world of radically incommensurable paradigms, as Thomas Kuhn had ably demonstrated in his controversial book *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, neither the particular nor the universal paradigms may be argued convincingly. The antagonism and tensions that arise when the process of globalization comes in contact with national and local identities though give rise to unique situations, also help define themselves against each other and find direction. Some national identities, such as that of United States, make universal claims, whereas others

such as that of India or China, express a particular national identity. Such imaginary constructions of identity (symbolic or cultural), resorted to by nation states, would be impossible without the help of international channels of communication or global economic pathways. It is still argued whether globalization can be viewed just as mere "transnational domination" or possesses inherent strength to liberate local cultures from state and national domination.

If we locate globalization of American Studies in this intellectual context, issues relating to its reconstruction, redefinition and re-conceptualization acquire a new focus and significance. The recent ongoing debate in American academia, epitomized by an entire issue of *PMLA* 2001 devoted to globalization, is viewed with a certain skepticism amongst scholars outside the U.S. as characteristically Eurocentric riding the ship of American capitalism. Obviously conceptions of American Studies within and outside the United States differ. In the 1960's American Studies abroad was synonymous with American literature, especially the study of canonical white male writers such as Hawthorne, Herman Melville, Edgar Allen Poe and William Faulkner. Later, a few mainstream white women writers such as Carson McCullers, Eudora Welty and Willa Cather were thrown in with a couple of Jewish-American male writers such as Bernard Malamud, Saul Bellow and Philip Roth to suggest sexual and cultural diversity. The study of American culture, based predominantly on cultural aesthetics, was divorced from social, political or economic concerns. Curiously the reconstruction of American Studies within the United States which began in the 1970's, was reflected in a general sense of frustration by some U.S. organizations funding American Studies abroad.

Organizations such as USIA or USIS began suggesting that they were getting "no returns" from weak-minded thematic studies abroad. Within American bureaucratic circles it became increasingly difficult to justify grants to scholars working on predominantly literary themes. They wanted intellectuals to focus attention on new subjects in American Studies such as information technology, management, environment and business protocol. And the reconstruction of American literary studies further directed attention to issues such as gender, ethnicity, rupture and race. The ever-expanding conception of American Studies incorporating new ethical-political perspectives within the United States and the thought of globalizing American studies in the last few years, has generated a new eclectic enthusiasm and spawned inter-disciplinary studies in related areas.

The origins of globalization may be technological, coupled with post-modernist information strategies, as argued by Frederic Jameson. It could also be political and economic as explained by theorists such as Malcolm Waters, Arjun Appadurai, Anthony Giddens, Ronald Robertson, David Harvey, James Clifford, Frederick Buell and Susan Stanford Friedman. It may be cultural as understood by sociologist such as Immanuel Wallerstein or as old as two millennia as seen by historians such as William H McNeill and Marshall Hodgson. The fact remains that globalization has become pervasive, is here to stay for a long time and must be dealt with seriously. Jurgen Habermas in his recent book *The Postnational Constellation* observes that in the new century, democracies, in order to catch up with globalization, have to work desperately to survive "beyond national borders" through "cosmopolitan solidarity."ⁱⁱⁱ

The lack of a long-standing tradition that American Studies is heir to and the fast pace of internationalization it is witnessing, now creates complex problems and offers new opportunities. Sixty years ago American literature, and later American Studies, arose from relative obscurity in departments of English and began to carve an identity alongside well-entrenched subjects such as English and indigenous literatures both in the U.S. and abroad. The speed of globalization and the supremacy of the U.S. in political and economic areas in the last decade have given American Studies a preeminent though contentious position in the world. Since American Studies outside the United States is not seen as separate from American hegemony many studies by non-American scholars have now focussed attention on cultural dominance and control, cultural adaptability and deterritorialization, rupture and identity politics. Within the United States literary theorists such as Stephen Greenblatt, Giles Gunn, Edward Said and others have already suggested fundamental changes in American Studies especially in literary studies and literary history. The anti-globalization movement and a redefined post-materialist ethics are already leading American Studies in new directions such as environmental issues, human rights, ecology, jurisprudence and border studies.

The fears of American hegemony in communication and capitalism, the twin arms of globalization, has led theorists like Enrique Dussel to propose a non-Eurocentric historiography that would be compatible with the interest of other marginalized institutions and states. American Studies is often seen as a cultural and symbolic manifestation of international capitalism in a postmodernist world. Any enthu-

siasm in the area is invariably misconstrued as hegemonic. The basis of such misconception is not groundless. Since global communication network involve new technology, the information travelling on it continues to be harnessed from the world of advertisement, publicity and propaganda either modernist or postmodernist. Jameson argues that when communication—such as American TV programs and sleazy Hollywood movies—rides the digital pulse of technology it acquires a specific cultural significance that inadvertently suggest a world culture.^{iv} This tendency is understandably viewed by most hitherto colonized nations as another form of colonization. But it would be naive to believe that globalization could be so easily reduced to American hegemony as convincingly argued by Arjun Appadurai in *Modernization at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*.^v Theories of cultural change must themselves be somewhat complex if they are to understand the complexity of globalization.

The emerging post-global reality finds local cultures getting transformed by Western life styles and products while at the same time transforming Western products to suit their own needs. In this way a unique form of culturalism—"the process of naturalizing a subset of differences that have been mobilized to articulate group identity"—now reconstitutes identity to a large extent, shaped by mass media and consumer culture.^{vi} James Clifford argues that as culture travels trans-nationally on the wings of globalization it becomes deterritorialized and hybridized.^{vii} Appadurai points out that deterritorialization "creates new markets for film companies, art impresarios, and travel agencies, which thrive on the need of the deterritorialized population for contact with its homeland" creating transnational identities.^{viii}

Globalization has given rise to a sort of cultural pluralism, which Roland Robertson interestingly believes originates in Japanese religious eclecticism and in a way privileges Japan technologically and economically.

Some theorists further argue that globalization has given a definite presence, if not provided a clear identity, to marginalized groups, races and thereby opened spaces for subaltern and silenced peoples of the world. The fact, however, remains that national economic markets are getting rapidly assimilated into world economic systems from which separation or "delinking," to use Samir Amin's phrase, becomes outright impossible. The entry of cable TV (American sleaze and music) into conservative urban Indian homes have transformed both values and lifestyles of teenagers. By directly entering conservative Hindu homes, globalization has done what the British colonial rule could not do in one hundred and fifty years. But the localized benefits of globalization have left a large segment of world population dissatisfied.

The anti-globalization movement witnessed last year in Prague before the annual meeting of IMF and World Bank and the recent one this year in Genoa, Italy at the G8 summit, mark a strong protest against the imposition of Western normative standards advocated by the triumvirate of economic deregulation, national economic management and market liberalization. Globalization has become synonymous with the Clinton and Bush administrations, indirectly helping multinationals to takeover indigenous industry and agriculture, destroying local knowledge and preventing groups of people and sovereign nations to control their destinies by reducing them to large geo-politi-

cal areas. After its initial success, globalization met with a series of losses—the Asian economic crisis, the collapse of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) project in 1998, which if it had passed, would have allowed corporations the right to sue governments if the latter failed to remove labor and environmental restrictions on free trade. It is commonly believed that globalization as an economic model has failed to live up to its promise. It has increased the income gap between the rich and poor both in the U.S. and poor countries and empowered large organizations at the expense of ordinary citizens. Only countries that have employed globalization together with protectionist state policies, such as China, Malaysia and India, have been able to survive. China rejected globalization, Malaysia did not follow IMF and India used selective globalization.^{ix}

Propelled by a terribly materialistic value of wealth accumulation and profit, globalization and its cultural byproducts have generated some anxiety amongst intellectuals. Amartya Sen argues that in a post-materialist civilization heralded by globalization the maximization of gains by companies seem utterly foolish. He believes that companies should be motivated by "commitment and sympathy" to people rather than self-seeking material gains. Large corporate houses should protect the environment, human rights, culture and nature and not just concentrate on making profit. The powerful economic, though at times inhuman, forces globalization unleashes makes internationalization of culture and its artifacts somewhat suspect. The occasional resistance to American Studies in certain developing countries is spawned by these concerns.

The multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary nature of American Studies has allowed it to adapt easily to the changing needs of the time. As Americanists realized the inadequacy of traditionally defined approaches to understanding the complexity of American culture and society they crossed and redefined boundaries and created a multidisciplinary approach. The internationalization of American Studies in the last two decades has further expanded its intellectual and institutional character making scholars see American culture and society in a global context. Americanists transcending nationality and culture have directed their gaze on American culture and society bringing out its variety, paradox and strength.

After the Second World War the United States emerged as a global power with hegemonic ambitions in the politics and economies of other nations. Cold War collisions with the Soviet Union strengthened American resolve to market American exceptionalism more aggressively. Government support to American Studies gave credence to the idea that American Studies was a part of American hegemonic intentions. Metaphors of American innocence, the virtuous American Adam, and the consensual American mind gained importance in understanding American culture and character. These metaphors pulled out the pre-war concerns with social betterment and its associated themes such as the Progressive and New Deal. The principle of self-improvement gave significance to America as an ongoing democratic project based on an engaging self-criticism of its problems and triumphs. American Studies therefore supported two contradictory assumptions about America—a messianic America, leading the world towards a superior civilization and a divided America revealing its contradic-

tions and Cold War biases. The violent and often traumatic conflicts within and without America in the latter half of the last century encouraged American Studies to question notions of American exceptionalism and cultural hegemony. The Civil Rights Movements of the Sixties and the protracted Vietnam War of the Seventies brought to the surface the multicultural problems America faced and a new international role it ought to play in the future. A self-questioning of the American cultural ethos emerged in tandem with the rise of feminism, ethnicity, and models of conflict resolution and cultural diversity. The emergence of cross-cultural contours in American Studies was modified abroad by foreign Americanists to suit their own cultural and social conditions. These studies have raised valuable questions for American Studies such as politicization of American culture and popular perceptions about America abroad.

An International American Studies Movement

Joint collaboration in mathematics and pure sciences have a long-standing tradition but in American Studies it is of recent origin. Early in the last century private and public funding of American Studies stimulated interest of foreign scholars in America—in related themes popularizing American culture and tradition. American-funded programs in American Studies during the 1940s, sponsored by Fulbright Foundation and the United States Information Agency, aided in creating an international movement for American Studies. Fellowships, grants and exchange programs involving American scholars going abroad and non-American scholars travelling to the U.S. gave American Studies a varied and comparative perspective. Recently, the

American Studies Scholars Program (ACLS), East-West Center Hawaii, Salzburg Seminars and U.S. Embassy programs sent non-American faculty and students to the U.S. to study American culture and society and occasionally to teach for short duration at some of its universities. International conferences conducted by various associations of American Studies, such as ASA and MELUS, not only stimulated interest in American Studies but further diversified areas of research. In the last decade ASA annual conferences have integrated papers by non-American scholars within thematic panels and not grouped them in a separate slot. This has given foreign scholars an opportunity to interact with American scholars introducing new perspectives and stimulating broader areas of study. In the 1980's international participation at ASA conferences was largely from Europe, but in 1990's scholars from Asia and Africa also presented papers or attended conferences. In 1994 nearly thirty-six scholars from fifteen countries attended ASA conferences. The increasing globalization of American Studies has prompted many foreign associations or affiliated associations of American Studies to invite U.S. Americanists, officially or personally, to conferences on American culture and society to present papers and chair sessions.

In the last two decades U.S.-European collaboration in American Studies has widened to include Latin American, Australian, Asian and African scholars. This cooperation is evident in some books published in American Studies in the last decade. David Nye and Mick Gidley (universities of Odense and Exeter respectively) co-edited a book of essays on the influence of American popular culture on post-war European society based on research material from The Netherlands

Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities and Social Sciences. In 1995 Amritjit Singh (Rhode Island College) Max J. Skidmore (University of Missouri-Kansas City) and Isaac Sequeira (Osmania University) published a collection of essays from New Delhi entitled *American Studies Today: An Introduction To Methods and Perspectives* that provides new vistas of American landscape in a cross-cultural context. All the three Americanists have, sometime or the other, been associated with the American Studies Research Center (ASRC) now renamed the Indo-American Centre For International Studies (ACIS) Hyderabad. The establishment of regional American Studies research centers in Germany, United Kingdom, India and Japan have not only globalized American Studies but also given a new boost to cross-cultural perspectives.

Joint collaboration between foreign and native Americanists has focussed attention on non-American analyses of American culture and society from colonization to the present. Foreign observers of America, such as Alexis de Tocqueville and James Bryce are increasingly used in understanding American culture and society. Now Latin American, East European, African, Mid-eastern and South Asian observations in American Studies have acquired a respectability that was hitherto denied to them. Foreign observations about America itself have become the subject of research in graduate courses at various universities in the U.S. All this has been possible with the sudden collapse of powerful regimes in the last part of the twentieth century and the sudden demise of meta-narrative of historical necessity. Jorge Luis Borges belief in the Jewish historical position of engagement and detachment gives validity to ruptured narratives—to be able to "act within that

culture" and at the same time not to "feel tied to it by any special devotion" seems quintessentially English and French. Multiple identities, rupture, blockage, marginalized voices, impurities of language gain a new sanction in the remapping of literary histories.

The study of American civilization as a democratic and multicultural experiment has led to comparisons with other civilizations of the world testing the strength and weakness of America as a nation. Such research has given American Studies both a comparatist and international perspective and led to globalization of its subject matter. Though it has generated some suspicion outside the United States, where American culture becomes synonymous with American imperialism, it has also spawned a whole new series of studies such as Immigration Studies, Diaspora Studies, Border Studies, Cultural Studies, Social Arrangement Studies, Immigration Studies and Media Studies. Immigration Studies analyse demographic patterns of immigration to and from the U.S. and bring an increased awareness and appreciation of immigration-related issues. Diasporic Studies understand cultural continuities and changes in ethnic groups living in America through sub-themes such as social and cultural assimilation or conflict. The "new immigration" in the 1960's especially from Latin America, South Asia, Middle East, Far East and Africa made immigration studies once more topical. A new area of interest associated with immigration is Border Studies stimulated by renewed attention on the geographical intersection of Mexico and the United States. Border Studies received a boost from colonial and post-colonial discourses of theorists such as Edward Said, Benita Parry, Aijaz Ahmed et. al. International cultural perspectives, ethnic studies, literary studies

feminist theory have also contributed to border studies and globalization of American Studies.

Internet and electronic mail has accelerated the dissemination of American Studies at a rate unparalleled in the history of communication since the introduction of the printing press. Access to information and international cooperation takes place without much financial inputs. Free electronic newsletters and email services allow the dissemination of American history and culture at a much faster pace, reaching people beyond the boundaries of the United States. Both *Connections* (published jointly by the Organization of American Historians and American Studies Association) and *ASA Newsletter* (published by ASA) provide a forum for international scholars to participate in academic projects and access information about faculty positions, prizes, scholarships, fellowships and grants in American Studies. H-AMSTDY started by Jeff Finlay of New York University is another electronic network on American Studies dealing with research and teaching projects on American Studies.

The mid-1980s saw a steady increase in international participation at ASA annual conventions as American Studies widened its scope to include the Americas and its multicultural identities. The 1989 ASA annual convention was held in Toronto Canada with a challenging theme "Americas '89" that went beyond the borders of the United States. Not only were Canadian scholars, members of the Program Committee but papers were presented in French and Spanish apart from English. Many American Studies associations abroad sought, and were granted, formal affiliation with ASA such as European

Association of American Studies and American Studies associations in India, Japan, Korean, Brazil Canada, Australia, Italy, Germany, Great Britain and some Scandinavian countries. The end of Cold War era in 1989 and a more liberal political restructuring in Poland, Hungary and Romania gave impetus to American Studies in these countries. They also became formally affiliated to ASA utilizing its facilities and programs to further deepen their knowledge of American Studies. They now attend conferences, subscribe to journals, receive newsletters and become members at subsidized rates.

Literary Studies

Most non-American scholars in American Studies trace their primary grounding in scholarship in literary studies. It is not at all surprising that most foreign Americanists come from departments of English literature, introduced early in their academic experience to popular white male writers understood as part of the American experience. As literary theory questioned this representation of American literature and introduced texts by women and minority writers, foreign scholars too began to reexamine the somewhat biased construction of American literature. Non-American scholars trained in the U.S. applied interdisciplinary approaches to arrive at a fresh understanding of American culture and society, at times exposing its paradoxes and prejudices. In the 1980's the influence of multicultural studies, feminist ideas, popular culture and media studies have not only exposed literary anomalies but also activated a transnational dialogue between U.S. and non-U.S. Americanists.

Attempts to incorporate transnational and cultural influences in literary studies are not new. The construction of comparative literature as a discipline to study cross-national, pan-cultural, generic and historic influences, interactions and transformations is relatively old. These studies gained momentum by the initial invention rather than discovery of America by the Europeans in rhetorical terms seen in the rise of chronicles of invention such as Christopher Columbus's *Letter to Lord Raphael Sanchez, Treasurer to Ferdinand and Isabella, King and Queen of Spain* (1493) to Walter Raleigh's *The Discovery of the Large, Rich, and Beautiful Empire of Guiana* (1595). Though these chronicles tried to give legitimacy to an Eurocentric perspective of America—by emphasizing historical invention and European triumphalism—they also attempted to erase Native American knowledge. But in doing so they became entrapped in a colonial identity which once again had to be reconstituted to develop a New World identity. The questioning of postcolonial texts—beginning in the 1960's with works such as *On Heroes and Tombs* by Ernest Sabato (1962), *One Hundred Years of Solitude* by Gabriel Garcia Marquez (1967), *The Mimic Men* by V. S. Naipaul (1967) and continuing in the 1990's with works such as *Lucy* by Jamaica Kincaid (1990)—revealed a new neo-colonial reinvention and triumphalism. Giles Gunn in his recent essay "Globalizing Literary Studies" in PMLA 2001 wonders if this third wave of colonial reinvention can "do something" by way of revealing the hidden assumptions and divergences of texts other than just become "another layer of fabrication" in a scholarly cultural production.^x

The internationalization of American literary studies in the last decades has been both wide-ranging and procedurally diverse. The lit-

erary protocols of conducting analysis has dramatically altered as evinced by the introduction of new concepts and terms such as subaltern, alterity, rhizome, politics of location, Diaspora, hybridity, mestizo, transcultural, Eurocentric, imagining race and deterritorialization. The pluralization of national traditions has given legitimacy to all literatures written in English from Southeast Asian to Caribbean causing enormous confusions in departments of English not only in the U.S. but also in other countries as well. Lack of expertise or disinterest in new areas has led to neglect or half-hearted attempts at teaching newly legitimized literatures. Though cultural and economic globalization has increased global per capita income, given impetus to human rights, environmental movements and nuclear disarmament it has clearly done so somewhat arbitrarily strongly favoring the United States. The politics of location privileging discourses originating in the U.S. have marginalized voices located outside its boundaries.

Since globalization involves cultural and symbolic exchanges and transformations as argued by Arjun Appadurai, it challenges, weakens and alters, if not destroys the construction of English studies built around homogenous national literatures. Globalization has increasingly demonstrated the transnational flow of culture and ideology thus shifting the grouping of literary texts from normative to functional similarities. From this point of view nationalist narratives are not seen as continuous but from time to time broken and inter-mixed with other tendencies. The old hegemony of traditional literary histories characterized by arbitrary political and aesthetic assumptions have been increasing coming under attack. It has been argued that traditional literary paradigms were largely propelled by an aesthetic ideol-

ogy that substituted "taste for rights, subjects for citizens, nostalgia for progress, and essentialism for historical contingency."^{xi} Greenblatt points out that minority critics have argued that, "the old literary histories routinely erased multiple differences, enshrining the triumph of the center over the margins, substituting a false vision of unity for a reality that was and is ever more multiracial, multiethnic and multicultural."

A shifting narrative paradigm begins with culture wars of the 1980s and results in a weakened emphasis on English literature of Great Britain and introduction of hitherto non-canonical literatures by writers such as Wole Soyinka, Salman Rushdie, Toni Morrison and Derek Walcott in departments of English. The impurity of literary studies especially English and American studies, (recognized since the late seventeenth century, refer to Greenblatt) the weakening of national narratives and cultural narrativizations through literatures written in English by progressives from New Delhi, Capetown or Antigua have given rise to what Linda Hutcheon calls "interventionist literary histories;" and have allowed people to reinvent their past and re-imagine their future. However employing the same tactics as used by older historical narratives to give legitimacy—evolution, teleology and continuity—modern historians employ the same method though condemning it in others. But the internationalization of American Studies as Greenblatt argues is not just a recent phenomenon based on Internet or Apex fares and international capital. Greenblatt writes:

A vital global cultural discourse is ancient; only the increasingly settled and bureaucratized nature of academic institutions in the

nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, conjoined with a nasty intensification of ethnocentrism, racism, and nationalism, produced the temporary illusion of sedentary, indigenous literary cultures making sporadic and half-hearted ventures toward the margins. The reality, for most of the past as once again for the present, is more about nomads than natives.^{xiii}

If the global nature of cultural discourse is essentially nomadic and not native, then it becomes imperative to track the "restless and often unpredictable movements" of expatriates as scholars and artists refurbishing and altering literary discourses.

Amitav Ghosh's *In an Antique Land* provides an excellent glimpse of transnational mobility in the Jewish protagonist Abraham Ben Yuji from Tunisia, through Egypt to India. Mobility studies provide a peek not only into a transient reality but an altered reality. It makes us aware, even if for a brief moment that things could have been otherwise; that life could have been lived on another plane, in another world. Literary history now takes into cognizance the negotiation of multiples identities and has shifted, as Denis Hollier states in *A New History of French Literature*, "from the assertion of borders through literature and the presentation of a literature within borders, to a questioning that results in the proliferation of these borders." In other words literary history "both constitutes and undoes literature" (Hollier xxv).

American Studies in Japan

American Studies in Japan date back to 1947 when Yasaka Takagi, a professor of law at Tokyo University, gathered like-minded scholars and started the *Amerika Gakkai* (the Japanese Association for American Studies) with about twenty-five members. It published a monthly journal *Amerika Kenkyu* (The American Review) which had to stop publication in 1957 due to lack of scholars. It also published six volumes of *Ganten Amerika-shi* (A Documented History of the American People) and laid the foundation of American Studies in post-war Japan. But Japan, immediately after the Second World War, lacked both financial and intellectual resources to develop American Studies. Japanese scholars of American Studies were financially not well off and Japanese universities lacked both books and journals on American culture and society. Moreover a general resentment to America amongst the remnants of Japanese nationalists did not enthruse many scholars about American culture and society. During this period libraries of American Civil Information and Education and afterwards American Cultural Centers became primary sources of information about the United States. Periodic visits of American Fulbright scholars to Japanese universities and the Kyoto American Studies Summer Seminars laid the foundation for American Studies in Japan. In this climate the American Studies Scholars Conference was held in Tokyo in 1964. *Amerika Shinkokai* (American Studies Foundation) financed the Conference and, two years later, the Conference became the basis for the reconstruction of JAAS.

JAAS held its first Conference at Tokyo University in 1967 and its sec-

ond conference in 1968 at Doshisha University, Kyoto. Since then JAAS membership has increased to more than one thousand, members who come from diverse fields of American Studies such as literature, politics, religion, education, sociology, women's studies, popular culture, ethnicity, philosophy, mass media and international relations. JAAS publishes *Amerika Kenkyu* (The American Review) in Japanese and the *Japanese Journal of American Studies* in English, both annually. JAAS convenes a conference in American Studies every year. Since 1990 ASA and the Japanese Association for American Studies (JAAS), supported by the Japan-United States Friendship Commission, have conducted joint research in American Studies in Japan on a number of scholarly topics.

American Historical Studies in Japan

Till 1960 American historical studies were seen only as a part of European history. It did not enjoy a separate identity. Since most "western" history was understood to be primarily European history, scholars of European history, by and large, wrote articles on American history. The Historical Society of Japan (Shigaku-kai), active since 1949, publishes a monthly journal *The Journal of History* (Shigaku-zasshi). Articles and reviews on American Studies published in it increased about seventy times in the 1980s and in 1994 American Studies acquired a clear identity with about sixteen books and eighty-eight articles refereed in its review section.^{xiii}

The rise of studies in American history was directly linked to Japanese historiography. Japanese scholars of modern history were

fascinated by political and social experiments in America and felt they could employ some ideas in postwar reconstruction of Japanese polity. Though the *Amerikashi Kenkyukai* (Society for American Historical Studies) has about three hundred members most of them publish in Japanese and are relatively unknown amongst American or non-American scholars of American Studies.

Post-war Japan was enamoured with the progressive history of the U.S. Historians such as Beard, Turner and Parrington who emphasized experiments in American democracy, people's movements and social reforms. Japanese historians combined an American progressive historical approach with a Marxist perspective of postwar Japanese historiography (Sengo Rekishi-gaku). Japanese Communist Party activist, Ken-ichi Kikuchi wrote a book on American slavery and Ken-ichi Nakaya of Tokyo University translated *The Triumph of American Capitalism* (1940), a book by American Marxist Louis M. Hacker. Interested in the process of political democratization of Japan, Japanese Americanists analyzed subjects such as the American Revolution, Populist movement, Progressivism, the Jacksonian Democracy and the New Deal. Those Japanese scholars who were critical of American Cold War policy paid greater attention towards unabated American slavery, aggressive capitalism and hegemonic imperialism.

Late 1950s and early 1960s saw the introduction of American consensus or neo-conservative history in Japan. During this time, books by many well-known writers, such as Louis Hartz, Richard Hofstadter and Daniel Boorstin on the American liberal and political traditions

were translated into Japanese giving them a wider readership.^{xiv} By and large, the response of Japanese intellectuals towards American history and tradition was somewhat disdainful. Though they understood the limitation of a predominantly conservative American history, they refused to accept the progressive historian's viewpoint that American history also dealt with social reforms. The reforms, which were considered progressive in the U.S., were seen as conservative in Japan as they took place within a bourgeois American liberalism. There was no strong anti-capitalistic movement worth its name in the U.S. that would be considered progressive by Japanese standards. Many Japanese scholars of American history felt condescension towards American liberal tradition that denied the participation of the common people in the shaping of America. Presumably Japanese scholars felt that Japan was truly progressive as it gave a larger role to common people in shaping its history and tradition.^{xv}

The escalation of the Vietnam War in the 1970's generated deep introspection amongst Japanese scholars, as part of the war was fought from American bases in Japan. It made them question their role as Americanists, just as their counterparts were doing in the U.S. The rise of new radicalism in the U.S. introduced the American New Left interpretations of American history and society in Japan. *Toward the New Past: Dissenting Essays in American History* (1968), a book edited by Barton Bernstein, was translated into Japanese. Tomohisa Shimizu published *Amerika Teikoku* (The American Empire) in 1968. Many Japanese historians adopted a New Left interpretation of American history incorporating it within the tradition of historiography. The Left slant was probably the forerunner of a subaltern approach to his-

tory that emerged in the mid 1970s in Japan with phrases such as "a new social history," "the ordinary people" and "history from below." Americanists in Japan shifted their focus of attention from the Jacksonian Democracy, American Revolution and Progressivism to immigration policy, race relations, labor issues and women's history.

Interestingly, early interest in American labor issues centered on Japanese labor economists and not historians. A few Japanese historians such as Hideyo Naganuma, Yu Takeda and Tatsuro Nomura continued to work in American labor-related issues. In recent years there has been a new upsurge of interest in working class movements but this has been surprisingly limited to immigrant and black histories. Economists and historians have increasingly turned their attention to retail business and labor than to larger issues of labor history in the United States. Both Tomohisa Shimizu and Hideyuki analyzed, economically and statistically, immigrants from other countries entering the American and European labor force. Hironori Uzuki, Kikuyo Tanaka and Fumiaki Hama wrote about immigrant working class culture influenced by E. P. Thompson's analytical social models. Yuko Matsumoto highlighted ethnic, racial and women's issues in labor relations, while historian Daisaburo Yui traced the Irish workers movement in California, which was predominantly anti-Chinese and nativist in character. Koji Takenaka studied the black ghetto in Chicago, Hayumi Higuchi, Shinobu Uesugi, Keiichi Shoji and Masanori Nakagawa analyzed the problems faced by black, Mexican and Chicano workers in the U.S. By and large most of these historians underscored the central role played by immigrants in the shaping of American labor since World War One. The demographic distribution of

American labor force in the U.S. revealed the growing population of foreign stock. In 1901 both foreign born and native born, but of foreign parentage, accounted for 35% of the population (foreign-born 14.7% and native born of foreign origin 20.5%).^{xvi} The population of New York City had 78% foreign stock while cities such as Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, Boston, Buffalo and Milwaukee had 70%.^{xvii} It is now generally accepted amongst historians, such as Herbert Gutman, that immigrant history and labor history overlapped in the early twentieth century in the U.S.^{xviii} The majority of the working force came from immigrants whose efforts led the U.S. to become a major capitalistic power in the world.

Many Japanese scholars of American history were impressed with labor relations in the U.S. and wrote on different aspects of its history. Tatsuro Nomura jointly translated Herbert Gutman's *Work, Culture and Society in Industrializing America* (1976) and MARHO's *Vision of History* (1984). He wrote two seminal books on the intrinsic relationship between labor and ethnicity entitled *Minzoku de yomu Amerika* (America Interpreted Through Ethnicity) and *Yudaya Imin no New York* (Jewish Immigrants in New York City: The World of Life and Labor of the Immigrant Generation).

The visit of Irving Howe and Herbert Gutman to Japan in 1982 stimulated a new interest amongst the Japanese scholars in East European Jewry and labor history. Both Howe and Gutman themselves belonged to East European Jewry and provided a personalized account of working class history in the U.S. during the Kyoto American Studies Summer Seminar. Immediately afterwards it was possible to observe a

new upsurge of interest in American literature, immigrant history, political history, ethnic history, cultural history, women's history and economic history in Japan. Japanese historians were intrigued by the socio-economic origins of Jewish emigration from Russia to the U.S. and the Czarist pogroms. Japanese Americanists tried to analyse the rapidly burgeoning population growth in the erstwhile Russian Empire, rapid urbanization and migratory movement within Russia itself and changing job patterns of Jews from commerce to industry. Economic ideas advocated by Isaac Rubinow and Gutman were employed to analyse the life style of the Jews living in the ghettos of Lower East Side in New York City and the Jewish immigrant community at large.^{xix} Though Gutman showed how the Jewish community was vertically constructed and "cross-class" he also revealed that it was predominantly "working class."^{xx} Japanese scholars were keen to understand the ways in which Jews were able to preserve their customs, religion and social habits even when they suffered low wages and long hours of employment in sweat shops. Ethnic studies emphasized the new cultural working class, institutions Jews and other communities created to maintain their identity in metropolitan cities such as New York and Chicago. The rise of the autodidact worker and the liberation of the working class ran hand-in-hand. As the immigrant worker educated himself, his thoughts turned towards liberating the working class itself to which he belonged. The rise of the international Ladies' Garment Workers Union and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America may reasonably be attributed to the rise of the self-educated worker. David A. Shannon points out that for the Jewish working class socialism was not just a "political movement" but "a way of life."^{xxi}

Women's Studies in Japan

The rise of women's studies in Japan is intrinsically linked to the Japanese feminist movement dating back to the 1920s and to the U.S. Occupation after World War II, which supported and encouraged political rights for women. The traditional roles of Japanese women as nurturing daughters, wives and mothers did not allow them either power or visibility in society or home. Japanese feminist Oku Mumeo not only institutionalized the feminist movement but disseminated its ideas to different sections of Japanese society gaining acceptance and approval of its activities. Akiko Tokuzo's book, *The Rise of the Feminist Movement in Japan* (1999) traces the history of the emergence of women's movement called the Shin Fujin Kyokai (New Women's Association) in the 1920s during the Taisho Democracy.^{xxii} Three Japanese women namely, Hiratsuka Raicho, Ichikawa Fusae and Oku Mumeo led this movement. They tried to mobilize women in order to provide them with political and social independence, and improve their educational and family status. The slow acceptance of women's studies in Japanese academic circles and the establishment of ombudsperson for sexual harassment at various private and state-run universities have given a new significance to the study of American women writers such as Anzia Yezierska, Mormon Silko, Hisaye Yamamoto, Amy Tan, Bharati Mukherjee et. al.

American Environmental Studies and Jurisprudence

Interest in environmental studies and environmental law is of recent origin in Japan and dates back to the 1990's. Japanese scholars, by

and large, trained in Continental Roman Law are intrigued by American jurisprudence that accords the same rights to animals and inanimate objects as it does to human beings. In the mid-1990's environmental organizations in Japan initiated legal cases on behalf of endangered animals and natural objects. Though these cases were dismissed by the courts on grounds that animals and natural objects could not be considered legitimate parties to sue governments or agencies, it rekindled an interest in environment-related issues and jurisprudence. In 1995 the Amami suit filed about the rights of nature in Kagoshima was dismissed a year later. The wild goose suit (ohhishikui suit) filed in the district court in Mito in the same year was likewise dismissed in 1996. A following appeal in Tokyo High Court was dismissed in 1996. Environmental studies relating to jurisprudence centered around Endangered Species Act of 1972 and legal cases filed by environmental organizations in the U.S. such as *Sierra Club v Morton* (1973) and *Lujan v. the Defenders of Wildlife* (1992).^{xxiii} In the first case the U.S. Supreme Court questioned the legality of the Sierra Club to sue the Secretary of the Interior who was to allow Walt Disney Enterprises to develop rich Sequoia National Forest in California as a commercial resort complex. The Court argued whether the plaintiffs have been harmed or threatened by government action not by the justification of the issue. Revising its understanding of the case upon Justice Douglas' argument the Supreme Court reluctantly recognized harm to aesthetic and environmental values as sufficient reason even when there was shared injury. The National Environmental Pollution Act that came in force after the suit was filed required an environmental impact statement. When linked to the EIS the suit argued the damage that the proposed resort would cause and

the Court upheld its interest. In this way Mineral King was saved from destruction.

Koichiro Fujikura argues that environmental laws in Japan do not permit citizens or lawyers to initiate a legal suit in the names of birds and animals—it is "a totally hopeless undertaking."^{xxiv} Japanese district courts dismiss such cases on trivial grounds such as "failures by the plaintiffs (Amami no kurousagi and yama sigi [black rabbits and snipes]) to meet legal formalities such as submitting a power of attorney and specifying a legal residence." Since such cases have caught the attention of the Japanese mass media it has raised certain basic ethical questions such as the relationship between "nature and culture."^{xxv}

The legal culture in Japan differs from the U.S. In the U.S. the U.S. National Environmental Policy Act makes it mandatory to provide an environmental impact statement. In Japan there is no environmental legislation that possesses a citizen-suit provision. Fujikura points out that in Japan government agencies "are famous for providing administrative guidance to developers, and may ask them to file "environmental assessments" of proposed projects. However, those assessments are not required by law and are not made public for scrutiny or comment. "There is no equivalent freedom of information act nor is there any way for ordinary citizens to access government information."^{xxvi} There are hardly any incentives for ordinary citizens to take recourse to the law to resolve environmental disputes—"there are no class actions, no contingent fee arrangements, no punitive damages, no extensive pre-trial discovery, no extensive use of injunction and no jury system." To

add to this Japanese courts have laid down rather rigid standards to sue, as plaintiffs have to prove that they have suffered "legal wrong" in a specific way. Given the somewhat rigid environmental laws it is difficult to imagine a versatile and active environmental organization to develop in Japan or for American jurisprudence practices to be studied for implementation. Only a sense of moral indignation at the threat to the ecosystem by construction companies and housing projects can help to shift the focus from man-centered ethics to eco-centered ethics.

Changing Trends in American Studies

A steady decline of Cold War ideologies and a growing dominance of multiculturalism and pluralism in the United States has brought down ideological barriers to communication between American and international scholars. A greater emphasis on ethnicity and diversity in American universities is easily associated with a subaltern approach to history in Asia and Africa that valorizes non-elitist or popular culture. Let me quickly add that not everybody in Asia or Africa is a subaltern, just as not everyone in America is a multiculturalist. Nonetheless it is hard to ignore the new emergent perspectives. American Studies in an era of globalization will get a new lease on life and attract a wide cross-section of scholars and intelligent laymen in American history, culture and foreign policy.^{xxvii}

Post-World War II globalization has given a new direction to international economy. Sir Anthony Giddens at the Reith Lectures in New Delhi insisted that contemporary globalization is characterized by a

greater independence of societies and not just economic institutions and economies.^{xxviii} He argued that economic influence during the Internet and WTO era was more complex and the flow of capital and information faster than in the world economy up to World War II. Since American companies and entrepreneurs are the key players in the world of information technology, globalization has been dubbed in some quarters as Americanization. Studies about the social and cultural consequences of information technologies on postmodern and Diasporic communities are already quite advanced in the United States. In the next decade, interest in these areas outside the U.S. would most likely be a part of American Studies.^{xxix}

Recent international exchange programs between U.S. and foreign universities in Europe and Asia will increase in coming decades taking American Studies beyond the confines of its national boundary. Many exchange programs make it mandatory for undergraduate students to spend a semester or a year at a U.S. university and complete its American Studies program. The United Kingdom has over ten programs in American Studies and most programs require students to complete one year at the University of North Carolina, University of Minnesota or the University of California at Santa Cruz. Rutgers University and Brown University have exchange programs with St. Stephen's College, India. The University of Wyoming has international exchange programs with Denmark, United Kingdom (Nottingham) and Utrecht. Keio University at Shonan Fujisawa Campus (Tokyo) has language and American literature summer programs with Stanford University and College of William and Mary. These student and academic exchange programs not only provide students and faculty from for-

eign universities to study in the U.S. but also give American students and faculty a chance to understand their own country from a foreign perspective.

The globalization of American Studies will involve a new partnership between American and non-American scholars enriching the very nature and scope of American Studies. Many universities are now evolving their own programs in American Studies. In September 2000, St. Stephen's College Delhi started the American Studies Program (ASP) with the active support from United States Information Service (USIS) and the U.S. Embassy. The Program has enrolled twenty-five students who will study American History, Culture, Literature and Political Science from the faculty of St. Stephen's College who will be doubling up as teachers in their own respective departments. Periodic visits from U.S. Americanists will give both direction and focus to the ASP.

Popular perceptions and cultural caveats about the U.S. that seemed immutable during the Cold War era have surprisingly altered today. The United States and countries such as China, Japan, Korea and India have understood the need to cooperate with each other in the area of e-commerce, information technology, nuclear non-proliferation, ecology and intellectual property rights. Since individual enterprise has begun to compete with corporate and state-controlled enterprises, individual initiative has acquired a new significance. This is true of American Studies as well. For instance the establishment of ASA in Japan and MELUS in India have been primarily the result of individual initiative. Similarly the return of ASRC, Hyderabad from the

brink of extinction has been due to the sustained efforts of its director. It is possible to say that individuals with an understanding of American Studies can prove instrumental in raising local funds and encouraging American Studies in the twenty-first century outside the United States.

Notes

ⁱ Fredric Jameson and Masao Miyoshi eds., *The Cultures of Globalization* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998) Preface pp. xi-xvii.

ⁱⁱ Ronald Robertson, *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture* (London: 1992), pp. 177-8.

ⁱⁱⁱ Jürgen Habermas, *The Postnational Constellation* (Polity Press: Cambridge, 2001), pages xviii and 57. Habermas writes, "The idea that the regulatory power of politics has to grow to catch up with globalized markets, in any event, refers to the complex relationships between the coordinative capacities of political regimes, on the one hand, and on the other a new mode of integration: cosmopolitan solidarity" (p.57).

^{iv} Fredric Jameson, "Notes on Globalization as a Philosophical Issue," in *The Cultures of Globalization*, pp. 54-77.

^v Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996).

^{vi} Appadurai, *ibid*, p.15.

^{vii} James Clifford, "Traveling Cultures," *Cultural Studies*. Ed. Lawrence Grossberg et. al. (New York : Routledge, 1992), pp. 96-112.

^{viii} Appadurai, *ibid*, p.38.

^{ix} Most Marxist economists, such as Prabhat Patnaik tend to agree that we need to exercise caution in going ahead with the decade-old economic policy of liberalization given the unique history of framing economic policies and the complex social and class structure in India. He argues that economic policy was framed in the 1930's during a period of economic nationalism, which though unsustainable now cannot be jettisoned in favor of 'marketist'

response backed by capitalist forces and agencies such as the Fund and the World Bank. He writes, "Other developing countries like India adopted such strategy, properly speaking, only after independence when the consolidation of the international economy had not progressed far and when the process of internationalization of capital in our sense was still in its infancy." He believes that though globalization may find supporters within the country in capitalists and affluent middle class, by and large the process, will be "detrimental to the working class, not only transitionally but over a protracted period." He further elaborates that a "neo-mercantilist strategy is not easily replicated nor as workable in the context of world recession, nor necessarily desirable in the context of India's extant democratic structures. Is it possible then for an economy like India to evolve a response of its own?" [Prabhat Patnaik, "International Capital and National Economic Policy: A Critique of India's Economic Reforms," *Economic & Political Weekly*, 29, number 12, (19 March 1994), pp. 686-8].

* Giles Gunn, *Globalizing Literary Studies*, p.18 in *PMLA*, January 2001, Volume 116, No 1.

^{xi} Stephen Greenblatt, "Racial Memory and Literary History," p.#52 in *PMLA*, January 2001, Volume 116, No.1.

^{xii} Greenblatt, 59.

^{xiii} Tatsuro Nomura, "Class and Ethnicity in American History: Studies of American Labor and Immigrant Histories in Japan," *The Japanese Journal of American Studies*, Number 8 (1997), p.#5.

^{xiv} The books translated into Japanese during this time were Louis Hartz's *The Liberal Tradition in America* (1955), Richard Hofstadter, *The American Political Tradition and the Men Who Made It* (1948) and *The Age of Reform and Daniel Boorstin's The Genius of American Politics* (1953).

^{xv} Nomura, *ibid*. Nomura writes: "Our response is difficult to explain briefly. Many of us felt sympathy to some extent toward the view that American history was essentially conservative. Surely, there were no very strong anti-capitalistic movements in American history. The reforms, which the "progressive historians" saw as "progressive", were essentially within the framework of bourgeois liberalism. But many of us felt embarrassment and antipathy

toward the denial of the role of the common people in American history, because many of us considered ourselves to be progressives in Japanese society" (p.#6).

^{xvi} *Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910, Volume 1. Population*, (Washington, D.C., 1913), p.184.

^{xvii} Niles Carpenter, *Immigrants and Their Children*, 1920 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1927), pp. 26-27.

^{xviii} Interview of Herbert Gutman, Mid-Atlantic Radical Historians Organization [MARHO] in *Visions of History*, ed., (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986), p.196.

^{xix} Isaac Rubinow, "Economic and industrial Condition: (A) New York," in Charles Bernheimer, ed. *The Russian Jews in the United States* (Philadelphia: John C. Winston, 1905), p.108.

^{xx} Herbert Gutman, *Work, Culture and Society in Industrializing America* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1976), p.44.

^{xxi} David A. Shannon, *The Socialist Party of America: A History* (New York: Macmillan, 1955), p.8.

^{xxii} Akiko Tokuzo, *The Rise of the Feminist Movement in Japan*, (Tokyo: Keio University Press, 1999).

^{xxiii} 404 U.S. 727 (1972) and 505 U.S. 3545 (1992)

^{xxiv} Koichiro Fujikura, "Standing For Nature in the U.S. Supreme Court," *The Japanese Journal of American Studies*, Number 8, 1997, p.30

^{xxv} *Ibid* p.30.

^{xxvi} *Ibid*, p.30.

^{xxvii} Some of the future research subjects related with American Studies may well include some of the "suppressed" forms of knowledge that M. Foucault has talked about.

^{xxviii} Anthony Giddens, "Runaway World," Reith Lectures, New Delhi, 1999.

^{xxix} The impact of globalization and information technology on American Studies could allow research scholars to access data on environment, social welfare and labor legislation both from rich and poor nations. This could develop a more balanced approach to environmental norms and blame for environmental pollution. However free access to information could lead to

plagiarism more difficult to identify as evidenced through recent newspaper reports on American universities. See "U.S. colleges track down 'copy-and-paste-cheats" *The Japan Times*, May 15, 2001 p.9.