

Introduction

Harry Harootunian and Tomiko Yoda

More than a decade has passed since the bursting of Japan's bubble economy, and despite some intermittent signs of recovery, the prolonged economic downturn that began in the early 1990s still weighs heavily on the nation. In the course of the decade, an optimistic view that the nation's economic stagnation is merely a temporary downturn in a business cycle, an adjustment of the excessive growth and the inflation of asset prices in the latter part of the 1980s, was abandoned. While the prognosis of Japan's economic future remains uncertain, the fact that the recessionary decade has catalyzed a wide-reaching transformation in Japanese society seems indisputable. During the 1990s, the waves of bankruptcy and unemployment reached post-1940s peaks, palpably eroding the vaunted lifetime employment system and cutting deeply into the core of postwar Japanese social compact and the sense of national identity. Many claim that the full revival of the economy would entail a further process of restructuring—a process that will continue to exact serious tolls on the Japanese society in fractious and uneven ways.

The economic woes during the decade have greatly tarnished the image of Japan, built up over decades, as a nation of an unending economic expansion. The significance of the 1990s as a major historical conjuncture, however, must also be understood through the ways in which it marked the dissolution of the status quo in another sense. The decade appears to have signaled the long-deferred end of the postwar, which Japan has kept alive as vigorously as the state once tried to prolong the life of the former emperor Hirohito as he lay dying. This narrative of the long postwar began with

the United States conspicuously conspiring with Japanese and the imperial house immediately after the war to absolve the emperor from war responsibility, which would spare him from going to trial in the Tokyo Military Tribunal. By preserving the emperor and the dynasty, the United States literally undermined the very reforms it had implemented to eliminate prewar fascism and to put into place the foundations of a genuine social democratic structure. At the same time, the United States also served as the principal alibi for Japan's failure to achieve its postwar aspirations, however it was defined (even though the retention of the emperor more than amply fulfilled the most primary of these ambitions). The "compensation" allegedly paid was one in unprecedented economic affluence and military protection, if not the promised social democracy.

The significant decline of this partnership was exposed in the course of the 1990s, providing us with an opportunity to reexamine the tangled historical relationship between these two countries since the end of the war. Once the Cold War had ended, the United States, with its control over the global market, and without real threats to national security apart from the rhetoric of so-called rogue states and China, recognized that the utility of the postwar it shared with Japan had outrun its productivity. While the United States had been progressively detaching itself from Japan throughout the 1990s, Japanese found themselves persuaded to cling even more tenaciously to a relationship, which for decades had excluded all others for the status of a partnership that was equal in name only. The Japanese desire to retain the dependent relationship it has lived with the United States points to a reluctance to let go of the distorted history that has retained for it both the principle and principal of political authority and thus the whole of its modern history. If the Japanese are always perplexed when foreigners, and especially Asians, constantly demand of them an account of their conduct in the war, it is because they were permitted by the U.S. military occupation to retain their prewar historical experience and make it a fundamental part of the new postwar order, unlike the Germans who were forced to confront and question it as a condition of shedding but not forgetting it.

If the recognition of the end of the postwar hit a Japanese society already reeling from the millennial malaise of the 1990s, the events of 9/11 on the other side of the globe would convince them that the new century announced even worse things to come. America's new imperial turn after 9/11 (return is a better description), war in Afghanistan and the invasion of Iraq, simply confirmed the worst of Japanese fears and anxieties that their status as America's partner had always been an empty fiction. While the

Japanese press reverberated with news of the shock attending the collapse of the World Trade Center by Muslim, notably Saudi Arabian, suicide bombers (that must have momentarily recalled for some the specter of kamikaze missions in the last days of World War II), writers on the Left (what was left of them) and the Right could share a large reservoir of agreement over what the event might reveal about the future of Japan and its relation to the United States. September 11 and its aftermath presented to them a picture of Japan no longer moored to the so-called partnership with the United States and the long postwar that had both housed it and shielded it from the rest of the world. There emerged a common acknowledgment of a national existence no longer exclusively bonded to an interminable Americanized postwar and a partnership emptied of all meaning but deception and bad faith on both sides.

As Japan was recognizing that its world could no longer consist of America alone, the United States had already embarked on a mission that set itself against the world or that portion of it not yet assimilated to its imperial exemplars and expectations. In the new American imperium, Japan was assigned the role it had always played, as simply a pliant client state of long and loyal standing, ready to respond to imperial dictates (read as requests) on a moment's notice by joining the coalition of the willing. And Japan, in turn, demonstrated the swiftness of its willingness to respond with money and personnel. (In the previous Gulf War, Japan only contributed cash.) Compliance with the American demand has simply affirmed Japan's true client status in the imperium, occupying a semicolonized position.

For both the Japanese Left and Right, the maintenance of the equal partnership was a basic condition for sustaining the relations between two countries. The blatant betrayal of this comforting illusion, therefore, elicited strong responses from both camps. What seems to have seized the attention of left-leaning observers in the wake of the imperial wars unleashed after 9/11 was the manifest desire to emphasize an exceptional universalism of the American state according to the tenets of a political theology. Kan Sanjun put it best when he concluded that American-style universalism means only that the United States is the world; and the world, now reduced to America, merely aspires to realize a "universal human value."¹ This sentiment, by no means exceptional these days, has easily been seen through the claims employed to underwrite yet another "just war" fought by the United States that immediately demands a response from America's supposed partners like Japan. The effect of 9/11 has been to stir memories of Americanism and its baneful history Japanese have lived since 1945 and,

according to some, since the coming of Commodore Perry in the mid-nineteenth century.

On their part, the Right (the center is defined by indifference) has appealed to the figure of an American empire to dramatize a long postwar lived under the shadow of a colonial power, an experience that reminds Japanese that they are still living as though in a precinct of permanent parenthesis. For many on the Right—and we are not distinguishing between so called conservatives, neoconservatives, and reactionaries—the U.S. military occupation and its policies dedicated to reforming Japan, called “regime change” today, constituted the first step in the subsequent Americanization of war. This meant for them the denial of both Japan’s recent history and a further proscription against it in the future. While the Left could agree with the Right on the baleful effects of the U.S. occupation of Japan, they were more interested in seeing through the logic of social reforms that initially promised the establishment of a genuine social democracy, which, to their immense disappointment, was soon aborted. Paradoxically, both of these positions lined up as indictments against the postwar occupation and revealed elementary truths that are hard to deny in light of the history Japanese have lived since 1945 and the current situation that demands their active and automatic participation in the American imperium.

In recent years, conservative and right-leaning opinion, decidedly anti-American in form but not necessarily content, has sought to account for Japan’s long subordination to the United States as a condition for insisting on a relationship based on difference and the recognition of equality between the two countries. According to outspoken extremists like Nishibe Susumu, the realization of this difference has become urgent since the terror of 9/11. Yet it is characteristic of this discourse, as of so much on the Right, that it is difficult to distinguish between the terror of the strike on the World Trade Center and that of the United States as it has recklessly embarked on an imperial war and yet another military occupation. Nishibe has even recommended emulating the Left’s traditional anti-Americanism as a principal condition for envisaging a program capable of distancing Japan from American imperial meddling and interventions in the internal affairs of other sovereign states. This overriding of local sovereignties lies at the heart of what the Right has called “the terrorization of war” and that refers to the policy of the George W. Bush administration to act unilaterally to pursue its own national interest as if it possessed the authority of universal necessity. (Nishibe is on record for having compared Bush with Hitler, a not too-far-afield identity these days given the view of loyalty they seemed

to share.) “America,” Nishibe remarked in a discussion with the patriotic cartoonist Kobayashi Yoshinari, is a “barbarian civilization” that worships the “holy trinity of Americanism, globalization, and vulgarism.” Standing at the center of the world, it casts its long shadow over a “puny” Japan, a “fumbling country,” whose existence has been exiled to its periphery. His solution calls for a new form of “Japanism” (not really different from its 1930s predecessor) that would explain to Japanese why they have been so blinded to the American problem and, thereby, offer them a way to become Japanese again.²

In this respect, no voice has been more vociferous in pushing Japan’s claims for respect from and equality with the United States than the current governor of Tokyo, Ishihara Shintaro. Nor has anyone been more consistently outspoken in his denunciations of the American treatment of partners like Japan after 9/11. Ishihara’s credentials as a critic of American hegemony go back well before the current situation. But there is no question that the aftermath of 9/11 has fueled his desire to emphasize his earlier complaint that Japan must say no to the United States and refuse any longer to bend to its dictates. Convinced that Japan is capable of setting its own political and economic agendas without American approval and guidance, Ishihara’s particular purpose seeks to elicit from the United States a recognition of respect and equality in a partnership consisting of the globe’s economically powerful nations (resembling the G-8) who stand together to fend off the encroachments of what he has called “third nations” like North Korea and even the People’s Republic of China. Lurking behind this program is the ambition to finally shake off Article 9 (the peace clause) of the constitution in order to openly and fully rearm Japan in anticipation of the coming struggle with third nations—something akin to but not exactly a Japanese version of Samuel Huntington’s call for the defense of Western civilization against the barbarians who are already gathering at the gate.³

Notwithstanding the univocity of Japanese opinion to delink Japan from the American imperium after 9/11, the Japanese government of Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro has moved swiftly to fulfill the demands of the Bush II administration to join the coalition in the Iraq war and this time to send military personnel instead of merely cash. This almost automatic response simply risks replicating the circulation of the image of Japan’s historic subaltern status to the United States, despite all of the recent outcries for the recognition of respect. At the same time, it also represents a significant step in a long-standing strategy of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) to circumvent and ultimately abrogate Article 9 of the postwar constitu-

tion, which, according to the Right, will finally make Japan free and sovereign again to make its own history. Despite the Right's vocal attack on the status quo represented by the LDP, the two concur on the agenda of abolishing Article 9 and to reaffirm national sovereignty in manners that would rehabilitate the disavowed memory of the fascist past. To this extent, the Right's critique of American imperialism and Japan's subordination to it in the name of partnership remains vacuous.

Regardless of the efficacy of specific analyses of American imperialism and Japanese experience of it issued by the Left or the Right, common themes running through these discourses bespeak the mounting pressure on the Japanese to question the nation's relation to the United States and thus reevaluate its long postwar. While Japan is simply no longer as important to the United States as it once was, it now has the opportunity to become interesting (pace Masao Miyoshi). The events over the past decade and a half have shaken up the numbing tenacity with which the economic nationalism centered on the image of an ever-expanding Japan Inc., on one hand, and the country's reclusion in the parasitic relation to the U.S. geopolitics, on the other. They have colluded to displace the discussion of Japan's past and present in genuinely historical terms.

The main topics in most essays in the present volume are issues, events, and other materials concerning Japan in the 1990s, and all but four of them were written before 9/11. However, *Japan After Japan* was conceived as an attempt not so much to assess the cause and effect of the so-called Heisei recession and related matters, but to examine how the recessionary, post-Cold War decade figures in the ongoing production of knowledge on Japan and its relation to the world. Thus the scope of inquiries engaged extend beyond the 1990s, addressing some of the most central and persistent questions concerning Japan's contemporary history. In this respect, we believe essays here supply the appropriate platform for examining the transformations of Japan in the new century, including the current conjuncture since 9/11.

The specter of the dissolution of postwar Japan in multiple senses during the 1990s elicited a complex set of reactions both in the nation and abroad, reshaping the perception not only of the country's economy but also of its politics, society, and culture. The introductory essay by Tomiko Yoda, "A Roadmap to Millennial Japan," offers an overview of the 1990s Japan as the perceived site of interlocking politico-economic and sociocultural malfunctions. Yoda analyzes some of the representative perspectives from which

the national malaise has been articulated, examining the politics underlying the manufacturing of “Japan in crisis.” The essay counters the widespread tendency to isolate 1990s Japan both spatially and temporally as an instance of a sudden breakdown of the Japanese system. Instead, it suggests approaching the decade in relation to the broader historical trends of globalization and postmodernization that followed the completion of Japan’s postwar high-speed economic growth.

While the Japanese recession of the 1990s has been closely associated with the banking crisis, Japan’s failure to keep abreast of the advances made by U.S. high-tech industries during the decade seriously undermined the confidence of the nation’s policy makers who had envisioned their country’s future prosperity founded on its global technological leadership. Against this background, the need to overhaul Japanese higher education emerged at the center of debates on the plans for the nation’s economic recovery. Both Masao Miyoshi’s and Mitsuhiro Yoshimoto’s essays discuss the impasse of the Japanese intellectual environment today through the analysis of the nation’s universities and the floundering attempts to import Anglo-American models of alliance between the universities and private business.

Miyoshi’s “The University and the ‘Global’ Economy” examines the neo-liberal principle at work behind the call to transform the universities to make them respond better to the economic needs of Japanese industry in the global economy. The mounting pressure to revamp higher education in Japan, however, has been met by strong resistance from the established hierarchy of professors who control university administrations, waving the banner of academic freedom as they fight to protect their fiefdom within the insular institutional culture. Miyoshi points out that what is left out in this ongoing struggle over the future of Japanese universities is a serious reflection on the social impact of corporatizing the university—for example, how “rationalizing” the academic disciplines considered redundant, including most areas of the humanities and social sciences, renders more precarious than ever the ability of the university to function as a source of critical knowledge.

In Yoshimoto’s “The University, Disciplines, National Identity,” the drastic curtailment of the liberal arts curriculum in Japanese higher education today is examined in relation to the disciplinary formation of the humanities in the nation’s academic institutions. The dearth of substantial criticism of the entrenched disciplinary frameworks in Japanese academia has not only prevented the emergence of interdisciplinary programs such as film studies but also highlights the limitations of the nation’s academic estab-

lishment that has consistently served as an ideological apparatus of the state. Yoshimoto argues that while the proposals to reform Japanese higher education allegedly aim at making the nation's universities more open and more accommodating to the intensified global movement of knowledge and information, they continue to construe the institutional identity of the university in terms of national culture.

While strong misgivings about Japan's future have fueled the pandemonium over university reform, the nation's past has also been a focal point of national debates. The end of the Cold War and the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the Pacific War, set against the economic malaise of the 1990s, have contributed to the rising interest in coming to terms with the nation's past (whether in acknowledgment or defiance of the nation's war responsibility). A number of essays in this issue discuss Japan's prolonged unease with its wartime history, which reached a new level of tension during the decade.

In "Japan's Long Postwar" Harry Harootunian observes that Japan's uncertainties concerning its present, amplified by its political and economic failures, have encouraged the appeals to memory, experience, and mourning as substitutes for the genuine debate over history. Harootunian finds in Katō Norihiro's influential essay on Japan's postwar repression of the Pacific War such a denial of history that has helped defer the completion of the postwar to this day. While claiming to correct the perversion that crept into Japanese history and the national psyche through the postwar disavowal of the painful and incriminating past, Katō reproduces the much rehearsed gesture of evading historicization, reducing the past to a series of neat dualities between authentic and inauthentic, native interiority and foreign exteriority, or the Enlightenment project of abstract linear history and the return to the mythological cyclical time of the folk. Harootunian analyzes how these double structures foreclose history as a site of intractable contradictions, smoothing over the irreversible transformations that have taken place in the course of the nation's formation as a modern capitalist society.

Katō Norihiro's work and the controversies over the Japanese military's brutal aggression in Asia are approached from another angle in J. Victor Koschmann's "National Subjectivity and the Uses of Atonement in the Age of Recession." The essay focuses on the status of subjectivity and its relation to nationhood implicated in Katō's work. In Katō's insistence that Japan cannot properly admit its responsibility for the violence committed against Asian countries and peoples during the war without first restoring the unified national subject through the mourning of its own war dead, Koschmann hears the echo of an earlier discourse that contributed to Japan's war

amnesia: postwar Japanese liberalism. Like the liberals that posited the attainment of modern subjectivity as the necessary basis for democratic transformation in Japan, Katō reifies subjectivity as a prerequisite for political action and accountability. Such a claim offers an excuse both to evade the consequences of the past indefinitely and also to conveniently displace the victims who suffered Japanese military violence as the other, external to the subject and its community that constitutes the immanent concern for Japanese society.

In “‘Give Me Japan and Nothing Else!’” Leo Ching reminds us that postwar Japan’s refusal to address the nation’s war responsibility coalesced over more deeply buried questions concerning Japanese colonialism. The essay studies the complex legacy of Japanese colonialism today through contemporary debates among Japanese and Taiwanese critics over *kōminka* (imperialization) literature produced in Taiwan under Japanese colonial rule. Through this study, Ching suggests that the relative absence of the term *postcolonial* in contemporary Japanese intellectual discourse must be understood through the incomplete project of decolonization in Japan, conditioned in part by the postwar U.S. policy toward Japan and Asia and by the broader history of modernity that overdetermines the relation between Japan and its ex-colonies.

Naoki Sakai’s “‘You Asians’” illuminates the mutually implicating relations between the United States and Japan that helped efface the latter’s past as a colonizer and the ruler of a multiethnic empire. Paying particular attention to the roles played by U.S. experts on Japanese studies in the process, Sakai considers the postwar consolidation of ethnocultural and racist nationalism in Japan and the continued influence of this national formation to this day. He argues that Japan’s singular and autonomous cultural/ethnic identity was fabricated in the matrix of postwar Japanese-U.S. relations. He points out, furthermore, that the process illustrates the more general predicament of Asia as an entity constituted through the postcolonial complicity between the West and the Rest.

Marilyn Ivy’s “Revenge and Recapitulation in Recessary Japan” explores the contemporary conditions contributing to the surge of interest in Japan’s wartime history. In particular, Ivy analyzes historical revisionism and its destructive yearning to restore transparent national unity and meaning as an effect of the nation’s loss of economic success as its ultimate source of self-legitimation. Against the anomie and instability of contemporary Japan, neonationalists invoke war as violence that is at once organized and organizing, legitimate and legitimating—a nostalgic site where the wholeness

of the national subject is imagined. Ivy sheds critical light on this rhetoric by identifying its resonance with the discourse of a young serial murderer, Youth A, on his killing and decapitation of a boy. By linking the images of decapitation and recapitation found in neonationalist literature, the writing by Youth A, and the megahit animation *Mononokehime*, Ivy notes the repeated narrative of loss and recovery mediated by the ghastly images of death scattered in diverse sociocultural locations of Japan in the 1990s.

Andrea Arai treats some of the same material studied by Ivy—the murder by Youth A and the animation film *Mononokehime*—but her “‘Wild Child’ of 1990s Japan” approaches them as testimonies to the tremendous anxiety forming in Japan today around the status of children and their function within its system of social reproduction. *Mononokehime* exploits the image of a wild child that appropriates childhood as a figure of nature, innocence, and origin ultimately contained and recuperated into the civilizing narrative of modernity. Youth A’s monstrous murder of children, by contrast, refracts such facile domestication of childhood, threatening to expose the complicity between Japanese national identity and the very forces that have eroded childhood in the society. Through the analysis of the best-selling memoir written by Youth A’s parents, Arai discusses the widespread move to reduce the murder to a lone act by Youth A, who is posited as a signifier of pure unknowability, silencing the possibility of understanding his unspeakable act of violence in relation to its historical and social contexts.

Tomiko Yoda’s “The Rise and Fall of Maternal Society” treats the troubles plaguing the contemporary Japanese mechanism of social reproduction as well, but with this essay we move from the issue of children and childhood to that of maternal and matricentric domesticity. Yoda examines the popular concept of Japan as a maternal society, locating its historical and ideological bases in the gender division of labor at work and at home that developed in close association with the nation’s rapid economic expansion and industrialization. The essay then follows the transformation of the concept of maternal society in the 1970s and 1980s in relation to the increased influences of large corporations on the Japanese social order. Yoda argues that in this process, the concept of maternal society became entwined with the regime of social management and control of labor that enforces rigorous discipline of mass competition staged within supposedly insular, egalitarian, and protective social space. Yoda analyzes conservatives’ recent attack on maternal Japan and their campaign to revive fatherhood and the paternal principle in the nation as reactionary attempts to restore the status quo,

disavowing the real source of their panic—the weakening of the maternal regime in the face of the new configuration of global capitalist order.

Eric Cazdyn’s “Representation, Reality Culture, and Global Capitalism in Japan” places Japanese sociopolitical debilitation in the 1990s in the context of the broader shift of power and capital away from national economies and national political organizations that have precipitated a profound crisis in the existing forms of political as well as artistic representation. Cazdyn turns to the phenomenon of reality culture, the avid consumption of “real events” in the media (such as cop shows, quiz shows, live Web cameras, and surveillance tapes), as a significant symptom of this representational disorder. Focusing on Japanese film directors who have problematized the conventional dynamics between representer, presented, and spectator, Cazdyn examines how their films suggest both utopian and dystopian potentials in the current heightened sense of anxiety over the representability of reality.

Like Cazdyn, Yutaka Nagahara finds Japan today grappling with the double bind between the local/national and the global/transnational—where the aspiration to strengthen the global competitiveness of Japan serves as an impetus not only for the proliferation of neoliberal policies but also for the call to resuscitate national symbols. Nagahara’s “*Monsieur le Capital and Madame la Terre Do Their Ghost-Dance*” provides a theoretical framework for analyzing this schizophrenic condition by tracing its sources to the internal contradiction of capitalism itself. The essay studies the fundamental impossibility of capital to completely sublate the nation-state, on one hand, and capitalism’s perpetual attempts to free itself of this limitation, on the other. Through this discussion Nagahara cautions us against making hasty assumptions about the deterritorialization of global capital today, insisting on the need to understand the current socioeconomic instability in Japan through the ongoing and inevitable negotiation between the forces of the capital and the national.

The growing popularity of Japanese anime, comic, and video game products around the world has drawn much attention as one of the few bright spots in the nation’s bleak economic landscape since the 1990s. Beyond hard figures of substantial revenue generated by these industries, the trend has been touted by some as ushering in the nation’s shift from being an exporter of hardware to an exporter of software (cutting-edge media and entertainment products). The pundits and bureaucrats have sought to capitalize on the success of these products not only in devising a strategy for the nation’s economic revival. They have also sought to use the emergent

image of “cool” Japan abroad in order to boost the sagging national self-confidence. The irony, however, lies in the fact that these commodities also seem to testify to the nature of mass culture today that resists easy containment in fixed national cultural identities. Essays by Anne Allison and Thomas LaMarre both address these issues, demonstrating from different angles how and why agents and properties associated with the new culture industry in Japan are irreducible to concepts and perspectives of modernist order that have, among other things, supported the nationally based understanding of culture.

Allison analyzes Pokémon, a complex of products including electronic games, anime, comic books, and a diverse array of character merchandises that originated in Japan and became popular around the world in the 1990s. Studying how it was created, distributed, and received, Allison points out how Pokémon incarnates significant traits of postindustrial capitalism. In particular, her essay “New-Age Fetishes, Monsters, and Friends” demonstrates how intensely and ingeniously commodity culture now incorporates affect and sociality in the processes of capitalist production and accumulation. Drawing on the classic anthropological theory of gift exchange, she examines the extent to which the distinction between gift and commodity fails to apply to Pokémon, confounding the conventional notion of commodity fetishism. She locates in Pokémon the effect of dissolving the boundary between intimacy and alienation, capitalist modernity and a premodern past, qualitative forces of affect and quantitative, instrumental thinking. This ambivalence is also evident in ways that products such as Pokémon have been invoked to reinforce a new national myth in Japan, transposing traditional social forms and practices into new media culture. Pokémon nationalism repeats a familiar insistence on Japanese cultural uniqueness. Yet it also suggests that the intimate social relationality once advertised as the hallmark of the Japanese process of making goods is itself commodified via games and other entertainment products. Allison’s essay suggests that Pokémon, which allegedly helps sooth the stress of childhood in late modernity, itself incarnates the logic of postindustrial society.

LaMarre’s essay “*Otaku* Movement” treats *otaku*, the cult fans of anime, and discourses that have arisen around this figure, paying attention to their roles in generating and transforming anime. He explores the possibility that *otaku* activities can be understood not simply through the received notions of reception and consumption but as a form of labor that maintains some measure of autonomy from the regulatory control and standardizing forces of corporations. Correlatively, he asks whether anime invokes a visual field

of radical immanence eluding a fixed center or a hierarchical organization and containment while constantly proliferating and mutating across multiple mediums. LaMarre examines these questions by studying discourses on *otaku* and anime in Japan led by figures such as Azuma Hiroki, Okada Toshio, and Murakami Takashi. He finds in works by these writers and artists provocative hints for theorizing not only a new global media formation but also the possibility of resisting the communicationally and informationally hyperconnected world from within. At the same time, he sees Japanese *otaku*ologists' inability to realize the full possibilities of their own insights. He locates the limitations of their discussions when they seem to associate anime with a cultural identity (Japaneseness) and the *otaku* with masculinity, even as they deny any localized understanding of media and the existing schema of sociosexual development as the means for understanding *otaku* fantasy.

While the 1990s brought about considerable changes among institutions such as large corporations and the state bureaucracy, oppositional politics have also undergone transformations as they have sought to respond to a shifting social order. The final two essays of the volume both insist that new types of social and political movements, while often operating below the radar of mainstream media and public attention, are crucial factors for understanding contemporary society and its future possibilities. Examining the planning of Aichi Expo 2005 and the opposition it catalyzed, Yoshimi Shunya considers the changes in citizens' movements and the context of their operation in Japan today. The essay, "A Drifting World Fair," traces the manner in which movements by local citizens exerted powerful pressure on the government to change the planning of Aichi Expo 2005 from being an avatar of obsolete development ideology to a more environmentally conscious project. The political landscape that Yoshimi's case study reveals is highly complex, with multiple potentials of collaboration as well as tensions among parties involved. Two lines of conflict, in particular, emerged at the center of controversy: that between local and national governments on one hand, and between grassroots community activism demanding changes to the top-down chain of command in the planning versus state and local governments reluctant to allow such participatory process, on the other. While major shifts in the expo planning occurred under pressure from international NGOs, Yoshimi's study illustrates how these developments were enabled by sustained efforts made by local groups.

The final essay of the volume by Sabu Kohso, "Angelus Novus in Millennial Japan," is both a survey of emerging forms of political movements in

Japan today and a passionate manifesto that identifies new possibilities for radical politics in the present. Kohso's essay helps us understand these new activisms in historical terms—how they take after and depart from earlier models of radicalism, particularly those associated with the New Left of the 1960s and 1970s. Furthermore, his discussions bring our attention to the fact that some of the groundwork for these new movements was laid during the 1980s, the period conventionally identified with the bubble economy and the overwhelming retreat of oppositional politics. The ascent of neoliberalism and the changes in the economic structure during the bubble economy provided one part of this context, creating a need for activism that attended to new modalities and loci of oppression and exploitation. Meanwhile, the activism in Sanya, support groups for jailed militants, and opposition against the emperor system that emerged in the wake of New Left politics during the 1980s stand as examples of the kind of activism included in Kohso's genealogy of radical politics. They portend the movements today in their nonsectarian nature, transversal openness (broadening the definition of politics to encompass larger domains of social experience), and the use of performative practices that incorporate elements of mass culture in their activism. The historical perspective that the essay advocates is one that is both emphatically critical of the existing conditions of the world and full of sustaining hope for possible changes.

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Notes

Throughout this volume, Japanese names, except those of Japanese who are based abroad or non-Japanese nationals of Japanese descent, are cited in Japanese order with the surname placed before the given name.

- 1 Kan Sanjun, “Datsu reisen to higashi Ajia” [Post–Cold War and East Asia], in *Gen-dai shisō* [Contemporary Thought] 28, no.7 (2000): 60–67.
- 2 Nishibe Susumu and Kobayashi Yoshinori, *Hanbei to iu sahō* [An etiquette called anti-Americanism] (Tokyo, 2002), 40–45, 123–135.
- 3 Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (London, 1998).