Journal of American Studies of Turkey
24 (2006) : 1-13

Introduction: What, in the World, Is American Studies?

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This issue of *Journal of American Studies of Turkey* has roots in its editor's two Fulbright teaching fellowships, with the Department of American Culture and Literature at Ege University from 2005-2006, and as a newly minted Ph.D. a dozen years earlier with the Department of English and American Studies at Palacký University, in the Czech Republic. Naïvely, he prepared for his first overseas experience thinking of what, not whom, he would teach. The innocent Americanist abroad had no inkling of how classroom dynamics change with students' affective distance from the object of their study. Only as he began to sense how that distance affected discussion far more than did any gaps in students' cultural knowledge of the U.S., did he really begin to wonder what, in the world, or at least in the Czech Republic, American Studies actually was. Who studied it? Why? What did they suppose the United States to be? What did they want it to be, and for what purposes? The teacher thus began his study, discovering an America constellated of known elements into sometimes recognizable, sometimes monstrous, and even, occasionally, quite attractive wholes.[1]

The most jarring moment of that education came not in some uncanny concoction of Niggaz With Attitude and *Beverly Hills, 90210*, but when a British visitor pronounced that Czech scholarship would soon "catch up" with, and be indistinguishable from, work produced anywhere in the West. Either such a comment assumes the existence of an objective American studies discourse, or it simply recognizes the geography of academic hegemony. Neither seemed at the time, or seems now, an especially attractive option. This special issue was conceived in resistance to the geography of American studies hegemony (see Holmes and Leyda) and the idea that there is a single American studies project. It begins from the premise that American Studies is not, and need not be, one particular thing. It examines the different ways that American Studies is constructed, the effects that those constructions are designed to have and actually do have, and the ways that American studies is practiced in some of its locations around the world. This focus continues *JAST*'s exemplary tradition of featuring essays on teaching the U.S./"America" in Turkey (e.g.: Hill, Kırtunç; Raw, "Fulbright"), the Arab world (Feinstein, Obeidat, Rosen), Brazil (Stevens), Bulgaria (Rosen, Yankova), China (Ford), and Greece (Maragou), a tradition that includes a previous special issue on the topic edited by Lawrence Raw (*JAST* 15).

The issue was nevertheless conceived in the shadow of the Post-Americanist[2] discourse that predominates within the American Studies Association of the United

States (A.S.A.-U.S.) and its allied institutes. This model of internationalization was concisely articulated in Janice Radway's 1998 Presidential address to the Association, "What's in a Name?" Like other Post-Americanist speculations in American Studies futures (*e.g.*: Kaplan and Pease, eds.; Pease, ed.; Pease and Wiegman, eds.; Rowe; Rowe, ed.), it institutes a significant revision of the "field imaginary" of American Studies, that is, of "its tacit assumptions, convictions, primal words, and the charged relations binding them together" (Pease, ed. 1). The Post-American turn rejects the hoary formulation of American Studies as an "**inter**discipline" distinguished by its focus on a range of cultural production and social formations centered on the United States, an evasion of definition that ably served a diverse field by remaining steadfastly noncommittal from the days when the Consensus School sought to produce an "objective" portrait of the U.S. as a stalwart of liberty staying the course between the temptations of fascism and communism, through the long 1960s, the linguistic turn, and early into the early years of the cultural turn. That multidisciplinary focus remains the norm outside the United States, where for obvious reasons programs often are structured like U.S. colleges' foreign-area studies programs. The Post-Americanist field imaginary has moved the discipline in the U.S. (at least as represented in its annual conventions) and at some of its international locations from that broad base toward a mode of inquiry at once more international in scope and more narrowly focused, producing new connections and new gaps, as well as the possibility of new ruptures with American Studies practice elsewhere in the world.[3]

The question Radway posed in her address cut at the root of the discipline's legitimation narrative. "Does the perpetuation of the particular name, 'American,' in the title of the field and in the name of the association," she asked, "continue surreptitiously to support the notion that such a whole exists even in the face of powerful [Post-Americanist] work that tends to question its presumed coherence?" (2). If there in fact is no such "organic, homogenous thing" as American culture, no identifiable culture "bound to a fixed territory" such as the national borders of the United States (13), Radway wondered, should American Studies not shift its focus from this "imaginary unity" (2) called "America" to the dialectic of "complex social processes deeply bound up with the exercise of power at specific, concrete sites" (13) through which the cultures that exist within (and also without) U.S. borders come into, and renew, their existence? To dissolve the illusion of national solidity in a moil of cultural flows, clearly, that would internationalize American Studies. It might also produce a new discipline. Among her half-serious alternatives were "Inter-American Studies" (29) and "Intercultural Studies" (22). But her claim about American culture is at once less radical and less disabling than it pretends to be, even as it may be more consequential for the future of American Studies than it may at first appear. On one hand, to anyone familiar with Clifford Geertz's by that time twenty-five year-old essay, "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture," the lack of totality and homogeneity in culture was old news. Indeed, to anyone familiar with life in any city in the U.S. for the past century and more, to anyone who read Randolph Bourne's "Transnational America" or John Dewey's

"Americanism and Localism," the myth of frontier culture from Crèvecoeur to Turner was long-since exploded. On the other hand, John Carlos Rowe notes, that the scholars whom he calls "the resistance to cultural studies" have made the same complaints about the concept of culture deployed in cultural studies. In a response that I take to be influenced by Geertz's critique, he writes, "cultural critics are not as interested in providing a categorical and totalized definition of culture as they are in understanding how this term can be used to designate certain practices and values for a specific society. [… C]ulture is whatever people happen to take it to be in a particular time and in a particular place" (Rowe 68). Moreover, one may ask of Radway, if American culture cannot be sufficiently well defined (for whom and by what standard?), will African American culture, Chicano culture, or any other culture pass muster? If culture is a site of contestation, then homogeneity and stability are the last things one should expect and the first things one should suspect — even, or particularly, the lazy invocations of "the dominant culture" that persist in their presumed self-identity and actual, totemic vagueness. Perhaps the error is thinking that the student of cultures studies objects rather than processes. Even so, the mutability and melding of cultures never prevented Ralph Ellison, for one, from talking meaningfully about "American culture" and "African American culture" even as he specified their ultimate inseparability.

To truly understand Radway's proposal, one must recognize the felt sense of urgency behind the need to redescribe the American Studies field imaginary. That Post-Americanist American Studies would not be a more "objective" practice Radway's reflections on the act of naming demonstrate; they remind us again and again that American studies discourse creates its object. As one attends to her own acts of naming and the subjects that they would institute, one sees that to ask "What's in a Name?" at a conference whose own name was "American Studies and the Question of Empire," and a conference convened at what she called "the edge of the so-called 'American' continent," (i.e.: Seattle; Radway 7, 3) is to situate the A.S.A.-U.S. in opposition to one overarching U.S. international initiative: the "rapidly advancing neo-colonialism that specifically benefits the United States" (Radway 8). Nor is that necessarily a bad thing. If anything, that project has an even greater political urgency six years into the Bush debacle than it did in the waning years of the Clinton administration, when the brutal capacities of U.S. hegemony were not so routinely on public display to the world.

Nevertheless, the Post-Americanist project is nothing like an objective foundation for American Studies. It constitutes the discipline's field imaginary in a way that satisfies the image of themselves as politically engaged scholars that Post-Americanists wish to have, a desire similar in kind but opposite in content to that of the Cold Warriors. And at every turn it illustrates the continued necessity of the name "American" as it summons the specter of a postnational, Post-American world order. Even if "America" and "its" culture have ceased to be — if they ever were — meaningful, delimited, "totalized" wholes, it is nevertheless true that in a world whose boundaries have been reshaped and made permeable by globalization and deterritorialization, the United States (that other subject of American Studies,

particularly beyond U.S. borders) continues an existence that requires close and wary study. Indeed, for all its dispersal of "America" into global cultural, economic, historical, and philosophical currents, the importance of (wary and critical) study of the desacralized "America" is never in doubt. A more pointed question not yet confronted by the Post-Americanists but asked of it by others (e.g. Bérubé, Kazin, and from a different, localized perspective, Patrick McGreevy in this issue) is the extent to which postnational academic formations despite themselves furnish the ideological space and train the managerial forces of multinational capital.[4] It has also been incisively argued by Sheila Hones and Julia Leyda that the ASA-U.S. project for the discipline's internationalization is by no means free of conceptual and discursive imperialism.

Revisiting the question of the name with a greater sense of urgency seven months after the U.S. invaded Iraq, Amy Kaplan used her Presidential address to stress the significance of the paradoxical "Post." She cautioned her audience,

> we cannot lose sight of the power of "America" in American studies. We have the obligation to study and critique the meanings of America in their multiple dimensions, to understand the enormous power wielded in its name, its ideological and affective force, as well as its sources for resistance to empire. We have thought much about "national identity" in American studies, but we also need to study more about the differences among nation, state, and empire, when they seem to fuse and how they are at odds, to think of how state power is wielded at home and abroad in the name of America. Furthermore, we need to study how meanings of America have changed historically in different international contexts. Through our studies of political, literary, and cultural images, we must understand how "America" is a relational, a comparative concept, how it changes shape in relation to competing claims to that name and by creating demonic others, drawn in proportions as mythical and monolithic as the idea of America itself (10-11).

Unassailable advice, certainly. Even here, however, a constricted focus persists. For in this contest of representations between the monolith and its myths, on one hand, and the forces of resistance on the other, there remains a certain implicit exceptionalism — "America" as exceptionally good or exceptionally evil — that Post-American detractors like Alan Wolfe harp on as they brand the Post-Americanist project "Anti-American Studies" (Wolfe). José E. Limón used a local instance from his native South Texas to trouble this internal boundary of Kaplan's disciplinary topography. Citing the "now-devalued narrative of ethnic mobility" (27) enacted by a fellow South-Texas native, Ricardo Sanchez, Limón proposed that the U.S. Army General "offer[s] in response [to the now-dominant model of American neo-colonial power] one specific, complicated, and possibly complicating story of the U.S.-Mexico borderlands and some of its subjects — places and persons very familiar with empires, minorities, and violence." Assuring us that he "take[s] very seriously [Kaplan's] observation that the world is indeed interconnected in complex ways," he goes on to note that

> when translated into local specificities, the very ideas of U.S. empire, U.S. violence, and U.S. minorities as well as the U.S. military become complicated sites with multivalent social and moral meanings and outcomes, frustrating any effort to give them a singular interpretation. Is General Sanchez a child of empire and now one of its leaders? I suppose so, but I would further suggest that, if this is so, the very category of empire is itself then up for discussion. I would further agree that American studies needs to marshal its interdisciplinary perspective to understand such complexities, but in **all** of their complexity. In the current moment, however, American studies needs to take care to continue as a site of measured, fully interdisciplinary, and historicized reflection on these complicated matters. It should not become its own version of monolithic academic "empire," mirroring the Bush administration and making, in Kaplan's fine phrase, "certain kinds of utterances unspeakable" (31).

The author has heard similar objections from colleagues from former East-bloc countries, who argue that that the field imaginary of Post-American Studies renders invisible their own experience of the post-World War II decades.[5] The "America" that these scholars construct is no less engaged for engaging in another project. Likewise, as Stephen H. Sumida noted in his A.S.A.-U.S. Presidential address, the Post-Americanist rejection of "American culture" leaves little space for non-U.S. Americanists (like Zvonimir Radeljković in this issue) who look to "the literature of American 'diversity'" for lessons because in parts of the world "the United States is still considered a model for negotiating ethnic differences relatively peacefully and productively" (342).

For all of its internationalizing energy, Kaplan's disciplinary topography also remains within the frame of the nation when she argues for a focus on the production, in rhetoric and image, of "America" in contrast to those "demonic others." No truly international study of "America" would find it possible to omit political, literary, and cultural images of "America" **as** the demonic other. Many such images greeted the author on his first trip to Turkey, which exactly coincided with the first release of photographs from Abu Ghraib. Such images are a crucial dimension of any authentic internationalization of American Studies, because they inquire into the many ways that "America" is put to work in the world. They should remind U.S.-Americanists that "America" is just as actively produced by non-Americans for use in specific political and cultural contexts and discourses. For while the revulsion at the photographs must have been well-nigh universal within the Turkish Republic, these particular bills were produced by the Communist Party and therefore activated a discourse of "America" different from the discourses that religious, nationalist, or liberal parties would have invoked.

In fairness, the A.S.A.-U.S. has not entirely missed this point. In her Presidential address, Karen Halttunen usefully brought an historian's and a geographer's perspective to a discipline whose futures have largely been in the hands of literary scholars. Turning her audience's attention to the many ways in which space, place,

and identity are constructed in everyday life, not only by elites for mass consumption or in specific acts of resistance, she reminded her audience that places, identities, and cultures, are no less distinct for being in flux, for being constructed and often contested topographies that, within and sometimes without the United States, relate to an equally constructed and contested topography called "America" (Halttunen).

This imposition of a model may not be the most fundamental level of conceptual imperialism within the Post-Americanist project. In the first issue of *JAST*, İrem Balkır has in these pages lodged an even more fundamental challenge to Post-American/Post-National cultural studies. She notes that while "in the U.S. and in Europe […] 'post-nationalism' is one of the privileged terms of an academic, economic, and political debate which delineates the transition from modernity to postmodernity, from the old order of the world to its new order, indeed from this century to the next," in other regions of the world where "peoples […] have to reinvent their national identities and draw their territorial borders after the collapse of their ancient regimes, nationalism proves to be a potent ideology." Yet this ideological project is suspected both by the Euro-American left, on the grounds of its appeal to national identity, and by the Euro-American right, for whom third-world nationalisms are — Balkır quotes Partha Chatterjee — "viewed as a dark, elemental, unpredictable force of primordial nature threatening the calm of civilized life ... [l]ike drugs, terrorism, and illegal immigration, it is one more product of the Third World that the West dislikes but is powerless to prohibit." Nor does ethnic status fare any better when, "for instance, in the western media's coverage of the civil wars and ethnic strife — especially from the former Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, and central Africa — ethnicity is maligned as a tribalism non-western peoples are condemned to; whereas, in the west neo-ethnicity could be valorized as something people and institutions can affirm and reassert." The result, "put reductively, [is that] nationalism and a certain brand of ethnicity are fast becoming the new collective 'others' for superstates such as the U.S. and Europe in the absence of general categories to conceptualize a new international system" (Balkır). Illustrating the problem that arises with this ethnicization of the first-world periphery — even in American Studies discourse,[6] even when it is imagined as in some sense empowering the "margin" to speak — Meyda Yeğenoğlu has described her own experience as a Turkish Ph.D. candidate studying "representations of the veiled Oriental woman in Orientalist discourse" in the United States. Despite the fact that she studied Western cultural discourse, she found herself positioned as someone who could speak meaningfully only as "a 'native voice'" articulating the experience of "Muslim women or Turkish women," but not someone "entitled to speak in a general theoretical language, for this is believed to be an exclusively Western provenance." Yeğenoğlu then voices a caution that "in its effort to critique Western Eurocentricism and its disdain for the culturally different, cultural studies should avoid turning the disparaged Other into an object of glory and admiration, for this would only augment the ideological premises of Eurocentricism." This caution compliments Limón's own caution about the wholesale substitution of a moralized

metaphysics of difference for what he with a certain wryness calls "the now-discredited narrative of ethnic mobility."

Balkır's and Yeğenoğlu's observations certainly reveal the ways that "recent moves to 'internationalize' the practice of American studies […have] taken the national for granted" by "work[ing] to naturalize the idea that the U.S.-based Americanist position is simultaneously domestic and universal," therefore able unilaterally to "shape and limit the agenda for American studies worldwide" (Holmes and Leyda 1019, 1020). But they also reveal the ways in which these new positivities constitute "America's" "Others" in and on Post-Americanists' own terms. The fact that "America" and the world look different from different locations, and that as a result American studies is differently constituted in different academies, limits the utility of Hones and Leyda's counterproposal to have American Studies drift "away from the comparative analysis of located practices (most often sorted by national academy)" toward a "'social physics'" analysis of the discourse" (1023). It may well be true, as they argue, that academics spend ever-increasing amounts of time in "translocal everyday geograph[ies]," whether virtual or physical, and that discourses create places and not vice-versa (1023, 1021). Yet the "global American Studies" thus produced "as a network of interactions" that cross borders as easily as cultures do (Holmes and Leyda 1023) are nonetheless still localized in ways that warrant analysis. Often that localization occurs in national terms because American Studies discourse in any location is often shaped by other discourses that are constructive of/specific to the location in question. Even at the level of the research project and in world cities that grow ever more homogeneous due to the social forces that John Tomlinson names "unicity" and "complex connectivity" (10, 1), a considerable amount of local diversity continues to flourish. An influx of immigrant and diasporic populations (both internal and transnational) may have similar **structural** impacts on, for instance, New York, Istanbul, and London that are ripe for comparative study. Yet those cities remain culturally distinct because of both the cultures represented and the distinct histories and present states of each city's cultural, social, and economic networks. The negotiations and contestations of cultures in the course of daily life create new and differentiated cultural forms by both hybridization and reaction. Moreover, in London and Istanbul as well as in New York, some imaginary "Americas" likely inflect discussion of integration/assimilation/multiculturalism at some level as model, menace, or something in between.

If one takes seriously Radway's contention that "those positioned beyond [U.S.] borders and hence at a remove from ordinary and taken-for-granted ways of seeing and doing things can frequently de-naturalize the familiar with greater effectiveness and thereby see culture and convention where others see only the world" (19) and Rowe's that "U.S. and other western hemispheric scholars have as much to learn from international colleagues as they have to learn from us" (56), even as one wishes the sentiment had been expressed in a more "geographically correct" manner, then one should also take seriously the field imaginaries produced beyond the borders of the U.S. by scholars and citizens whose work is by default **inter**national and

intercultural. The "on-the-ground" experiences of teachers and students beyond American national borders but within the reach of American products and propaganda have much to teach us about how and why political and popular cultures produce the "Americas" that they do, and also about the ways that globalization affects (and effects) cultural identity. If many of those scholars see an American culture where U.S. scholars do not, or see it differently than U.S.-based Americanists do, the difference may well have less to do with misperceptions than with what one might describe as the fractal character of culture. What patterns one sees depends on the scale at which the observer perceives. The choice of scale is rarely innocent; it is much more likely to be affected by the scholar's field imaginary, the needs and desires to which she is responding.

The essays that follow are field notes on international American Studies, Post-American and otherwise both because they are notes **from** the field and because they are notes **about** the field, its practice, and its history in different parts of the world. They discuss configurations of American studies at the level of the individual course and the program level; they use the methods of American studies to look behind and beneath the image of "America" disseminated by the U.S. government and media as well as the "America" of local mythologies; they use American studies as a mirror and even at times a model; and they consider classrooms as sites of cultural exchange. Patrick McGreevy opens the issue by raising what he calls "the American question": how ought one to understand, and what is one to do in the face of, the ubiquitous power maintained by a globally dispersed network of American (military and corporate) personnel whose loyalties are to, and whose interests are of, the U.S. (even as Halliburton moves its operations to Dubai) rather than the countries and cultures in which they are located? For American studies professors in the Middle East, he notes, the American question "can seem to be the very air we breathe." His fourteen dispatches from Beirut during the 2006 war for Juan Cole's *Informed Comment* Website (Cole) remind us — if we need reminding — how toxic that atmosphere can be, even in a country that, he notes, has had a sometimes-productive relationship with the U.S. (McGreevy). James M. Hicks and Zvonomir Radeljković introduce to readers the Balkan states' first stand-alone American studies degree program, one founded where the ideas of "America" and American studies have somewhat different valences. For while the U.S. government's interest in fostering American studies in Sarajevo is significantly driven by its search for allies in the Islamic world, among scholars in Sarajevo who first began to plan an American studies curriculum in the 1980s, the program that emerged after the war in Bosnia embodies a hope that "Bosnians may manage to avoid some of the pitfalls and also emulate many of the solutions [to the threat of violent cultural conflict] already present in American life and art."

While McGreevy and Hicks and Radeljković describe programs in early stages and supported by institutions and benefactors who believe it important to understand (if not to trust) the U.S., S. Jay Kleinberg writes from the U.K., where programs are in decline. The reasons are several, she writes, including the restructuring of higher education after the institution of the research assessment

exercise, the unpopularity of the U.S., and the lack of vocational utility in the degree (a disadvantage, perhaps, for American studies in an English-speaking location). Kleinberg lost her own program during the reorganization, and she describes her use of American studies methodologies and a variety of materials to convey a richly textured understanding the nineteenth-century U.S. to majors in History and Politics — as well as American engineering students on a summer abroad program. Isabel Fernandes Alves presents a course that she offers both to study American literature and American mythology and at the same time to make her Portuguese students more aware of the world around them. Despite the irony of using the literature of the most wasteful and polluting of nations to teach ecocriticism, she uses canonical and multicultural American writing to approach American studies and to address an absence in Portuguese literature.

All of the articles at some point engage the sheer amount of conflicting and potentially misleading information available about the U.S. that emanates from inside its borders, whether from the government or various forms of media. Ricardo Miguez and Virginia C. Hendrick take the challenge as their focus when they discuss teaching American studies in Brazil. Suggesting that popular American myths and counter-myths present a greater obstacle for professors of American studies than lack of knowledge would present, the authors examine six common myths about Americans and American culture, including the idea that one can describe **the** American or **the** American culture. Irena Praitis's reflection on her Fulbright semester in Lithuania, her parents' natal land, is about cross-cultural misunderstanding in a different sense. Praitis describes the challenges of a situation in which one is not only the teacher of students who maintain (as most do) contradictory conceptions of the U.S. but when one is also, as representative American, the text. She probingly reflects on the cultural and historical forces that shape classroom cultures and the value placed on a student's individual "voice," and on her students' ability to identify with American multicultural literature. Yvonne Hopkins reverses the process as she recalls the U.S. she grew up with vicariously through its literature and her grandfather's love of the Western, only to wind up, years later, teaching American literature to multi-ethnic yet identifiably "American" high school students in what once was the West (west, at least, of the Battle of San Jacinto). In closing, the editor must extend heartfelt thanks to Dr. Jennifer Harris, of Mount Allison College in Canada, for her advice and assistance in assembling the issue's lineup of contributors. Unforeseeable circumstances prevented her from submitting her institutional history of American Studies in Canada, as she had intended, but we can hope to see it in the future.

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Notes

[1] See McNamara.

[2] These critics are "Post" because they suspect the focus on, and the continued utility of the concept of, the nation, and they repudiate the concept of "America" that energized the American studies scholars of the 1950s and 1960s who "**believe**[d] in America" (Marx 120). Nevertheless, their discourse is are as reliant as any Americanists' on those very constructs—the nation/the United States/America—that they would go beyond. Pease uses the term "Post-Americanist" in a title (**National**) but never defines it; throughout his Introduction to the volume, he prefers "New Americanists," the title of the series he edits for Duke UP.

[3] In Germany, Günter Lenz (3) notes, a "sequence of politically engendered and committed interdisciplinary programs" in minority studies, since dislodged by post-identity discourse, had followed the repudiation of American Studies in "the late 1960s" as "intellectually bankrupt, politically reactionary, a handmaiden of American imperialism." Elsewhere, as Stephen H. Sumida noted in his Presidential address, the increasing centrality in U.S. American Studies of "a 'discussion of identity politics variously represented'" to the exclusion of "concerns […] 'with economy, security, politics,' and so forth" (335) has opened a gulf between U.S. American studies and American studies in many other areas. As a pedagogical matter, non-U.S. students of American studies, like American undergraduate students in foreign-area studies programs, need the broad swath of social, historical, and cultural information that U.S.-located Americanists (rightly or wrongly) presume their students already possess. As a professional matter, Americanists

in many disciplines often depend upon American Studies programs and their national or regional associations for intellectual sustenance, unlike U.S.-located Americanists who may find alternative homes in a host of academic departments that take the U.S. as a principal focus, while networks of professional associations and journals will nurture their intellectual development. The historians' and literary scholars' "shop talks" at EAAS have no A.S.A.-U.S. equivalent and probably need none when the Modern Language Association of America and the American Historical Association each draw thousands of scholars to their annual conventions.

[4] In their collaborative Introduction, the contributors to Rowe, ed., differentiate their "postnationalist" project from the "postnational" "New Americanist" movement represented by Pease, ed.; Kaplan and Pease, eds.; and Pease and Weigman, eds. They write, "While **post-national** has gained a certain currency in discussions of globalization and revisionary 'New Americanists' projects, many of us worried about the term's developmental trajectory […], as though the time of the nation-state had passed. [… N]one of us believes that the nation-state has been or at any time in the near future will be superseded." They continue, "Our use of the word **national** thus refers to a complex and irreducible array of discourses, institutions, policies, and practices which, even if they are in flux or in competition with other allegiances, cannot be easily wished away by the application of the **post-**prefix" (Rowe, ed. 1, 2). As Halliburton, the American defense contractor and former employer of U.S. Vice President Richard Bruce Cheney prepares to move its operations base to Dubai, one might wonder if the present age is not Marx in reverse, in which only the working man or woman has a country; it may be the age of diaspora (Clifford, 311), but human movement is far less free than the movement of capital and commodities.

[5] Most recently, the author heard such sentiments at A.S.A.-Turkey (2005) and EAAS (2006).

[6] Desmond and Dominguez note, for instance, that Latin-American Americanists rarely are "acknowledged to have something to say about U.S. history or contemporary U.S. culture except with regard to [Latino and Latin-American interests], and then only in terms of internally generated U.S. paradigms of cultural difference" (476).