

Constructing Nationhood
in Modern East Asia

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Discoveries of the Hōryūji

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Today the Hōryūji is synonymous with beginnings, origins, antiquity, and so on, temporal metaphors that establish its authenticity and importance as an archetypal Japanese temple. I have been struck by the number of times important figures in the Meiji period are said to have “discovered” the Hōryūji (or parts thereof). There is no doubt that today the Hōryūji is a central artifact in the history of Japan; that is the issue in this essay, exploring the reasons why a lesser temple has gained this preeminent stature.¹

These discoveries of the Hōryūji are indicative of a reconceptualization of society and the world in which elements of the past, indeed, the past itself, gain new meaning. The use of the word *discovery* in reference to man-made objects signifies that such objects must be “forgotten,” that is, displaced as unimportant, and then resignified according to a different meaning system that revalues certain aspects of that object. In modern societies, that meaning system is a new epistemology in which time becomes the primary basis upon which society is organized. Discovery makes claims for the originary moment of a continuous narrative, in this case of the nation-state. It provides that moment from which development can be described as well as the point from which distinctions (hence unity) occur. In the case of the archipelago, Meiji intellectuals discovered artifacts, such as the Hōryūji, to give meaning to an idea of Japan, a unitary place both connected to and apart from the continent.

An interesting aspect of modernity is the rather paradoxical contradictions that are sublated, for example, separation and totalization, the universalizing epistemology that is based upon careful distinctions from outsiders, and mobility and stability, claims to newness that require an elevation of the old. Henri Lefebvre describes this obsession with

past:

This period which sees and calls itself entirely new is overcome by an obsession with the past: memory, history. History begins *hic et nunc*, with the here-and-now, with each passing minute. Historical becoming is immediately upon us, and immediately it becomes history, known and recognized historicity, historical consciousness, chained to a vaguely distant past according to which the present vainly attempts to situate itself.²

To articulate that past, a new conceptualization of time was also necessary, that of progress, one that used the past but also separated the present from it. This articulation of a different time, moreover, requires the rearticulation of space, that is, how persons interact with their human and natural environments. Inside and outside were redefined but in such a way that outside has been defined in national terms while other forms of alterity have been occulted (through incorporation) by the new space of the nation. Describing a passage by Walter Benjamin, Peter Osborne comments on this reorientation through a shift in the meaning of tradition:

Yet it contains some of Benjamin's sharpest insights, not only into modernity as a destruction of tradition, but also into the production of the idea of tradition within modernity as its inescapable dialectical other.³

Tradition in the first instance consists of those habitual and customary codes that connect people to the natural (and supernatural) world. Tradition in the latter instance is an idea — of course grounded in the empiricism of history — that gains significance within modernity but always as its other.

The discoveries of the Hōryūji — the destruction of Buddhist icons in the initial years of the Meiji; the first survey of its contents in 1872, ordered by the central government (Dajōkan); the Nara exhibition held on the grounds of the Tōdaiji, where artifacts from the Hōryūji and Shōsōin were displayed; the discovery of the Kannon in the Hall of Dreams (Yumedono) by Okakura Tenshin and Ernest Fenollosa; and the explication of an architectural history of Japan by Itō Chūta — are indicative of such a transformation of tradition. They indicate a search for new temporal and spatial meanings to incorporate pasts into a unified nation-state, to what Lefebvre calls a representation of space. Each

discovery served as an originary moment for a particular narrative about the past as a symbol of power, as evidence of an imperial legacy, as a repository of Asian art, and as a historical site and datum for the unfolding of Japan.

Heteronomous Traditions

Around the time of the Meiji Restoration, people living in the vicinity of the Hōryūji called it a *bimbōtera* (poor temple).⁴ It was in dilapidated condition: after the cadastral survey in 1585, Hideyoshi reduced the Hōryūji's annual stipend to twelve hundred koku, and two decades later Tokugawa Ieyasu lowered it to a thousand.⁵ Such a reduction of financial resources obviously reduced its power and influence and also forced priests to become rather enterprising. On two or three occasions, they took sacred objects — especially a statue of and relics related to Shōtoku Taishi — on *degaichō* to the Ekōin in Edo. (*Degaichō* were the temporary unveilings of sacred objects outside temple grounds to tap supporters of and foster more support for temple icons, as in the case of the Hōryūji, the Taishi cult which worshiped Shōtoku Taishi. They also sold trinkets — hanging and stone lanterns — at the temple to worshippers of the Taishi cult for placement before the Shōryōin (Chapel) and Saiendō (West Round Hall).⁶

Discovery One: Pasts Prior to History

At the outset of the Meiji period, the new government cut the temple's stipend to 250 koku and in 1874 reduced it again to 125. But more troubling than poverty was the discontent directed toward Buddhist temples at the beginning of the Meiji. One of the first laws of the new government, separating bodhisattva and *kami* (*shinbutsu kyūri*), set off the widespread pillaging of Buddhist temples (*haibutsu kishaku*), many of them former sites of political and economic power.⁷ Buddhist statues were decapitated; sutras and other texts were destroyed; buildings were burned, torn down, or sold; and priests and monks retired en masse.⁸ Destruction at the Kōfukuji, the most powerful temple in Nara through the Tokugawa period, was considerable. Books were either burned (the bonfire reportedly lasted for more than three months) or their pages were used as wrapping paper for lacquerware or as lining for tea boxes. The three-roofed pagoda was sold for thirty yen, and local officials

proposed to burn down the five-roofed pagoda but demurred, fearing the spread of fire.⁹ Fortunately this pagoda was not burned, but it was saved not to preserve an invaluable artifact but out of the fear that nearby houses and shops would also be destroyed. In contrast, the Hōryūji was largely spared, probably due to its lower status, relative isolation, and the popularity of the Taishi cult.¹⁰ Nevertheless, the *bimbōdera* was dilapidated: many monks had retired or left the temple, local government officials proposed the demolition of the cloister walls on both sides of the south gate (*nandaimon*), and cows and horses were housed inside the cloister.¹¹ In other words, the years of relative obscurity throughout the Muromachi and Edo periods facilitated forgetting or indifference toward the temple that would be critical to its transformation into a Japanese archetype. It was not completely forgotten; it was part of that social space of the everyday where farmers could keep their livestock.

This first discovery of the Hōryūji was far from a pivotal moment in its elevation to archetype. Indeed it was not a discovery at all; instead, it is indicative of a rejection of the past, the immediate past, and a disregard for the significance of this site in the emergence of a "Japan." In fact, it shows that time, the past, was not important to the present, that the temple was indeed part of the present, but one connected to a disgraced power structure that oversaw local matters. Second, there is no Japan or East Asia here. The space that the Hōryūji represented was of the immediate environs (the village of Hōryūji or Ikaruga) and the believers who comprised the Taishi cult. It would be a leap to extrapolate the latter into evidence of a nation.

Discovery Two: Loss of Function

In May 1871, the Dajōkan, concerned about the destruction of objects from the ancient and recent past, issued an edict on the preservation of old things. It states:

There are not a few benefits of some artifacts and old things in the investigation of today's transformation from old to new and of the history (*enka*) of systems and customs. It is natural to hate the old and struggle for the new, but actually we should lament the gradual loss and destruction of evil customs (*ryūhei*).¹²

This is the first recognition of the importance of the Hōryūji as past, what can be called "discovery." It contained old things, especially those tied to the emperor. One of the results of the edict was that the Ministry of Education sent out an investigatory team, headed by Machida Hisanari. Machida was a key figure who first recognized the continuity between modern society and its past while on a study tour in Europe. The survey began in May 1872 and lasted four months, with the team visiting Kyoto, Osaka, Kanagawa, Shizuoka, Aichi, Watarai, Sakai, Ashigara, Shiga, Wakayama and Nara.¹³ Machida was accompanied by Uchida Masao and Ninagawa Noritane, who was in the exhibition section (*tsukubutsuikyoku*).¹⁴

Although it was not articulated in this way, Machida's observation is a recognition that modern society has no fixed referent. Modernity, itself, is the subject.¹⁵ One effect is the loss of previous congruence between meaning and object or, in Benjamin's terms, the destruction of tradition (as custom and habit). This issue, of course, is not new; intellectuals and commoners in transforming societies have constantly searched for the limits of change, the point where society will no longer be recognizable to its anterior rather than as another homogenized place. We must remember that the nation fills this vacuum; the idea of nation becomes that referent, the particularities of the past, customs destroyed by modern liberal-capitalist forces, are reemplotted as "traditions" authorizing the nation as an immanent form.

This survey designed to confirm the existence of and record artifacts was the first step in preservation efforts, that is, to establish that referent or the idea of tradition within modernity.¹⁶ One of the aspects that stands out most clearly is that, historical rhetoric notwithstanding, from this early date the new leadership shows concern for old things along with an insistence on transformation to the new. To best facilitate that transformation to the new, the administrative personnel in the Dajōkan saw value in retaining the past, that is, old things. Ninagawa's draft report of the survey complains of "a foreigner's" observation that Japanese like novelty and shun old things and that people were selling artifacts from the temples and shrines of the western capital (Kansai). He then warns that if this continues in a number of years there will be no evidence of the ancient country (*kuni no jōdai no jiseki*).¹⁷ Ninagawa is advocating the establishment of museums as sites for preservation and display. At this early stage of the new state, we see recognition of the need for history (*enka*). The past and wide dissemination of this

information — the education of the population — would foster belief in the nation.

But we must not go too far. There is an idea of history, but it is *enkaku* (closer to chronicles and accounts, *histoire*) not *rekishi* (today's linear notion of developmental time).¹⁸ There is little teleology. At this point, the Dajōkan seemed concerned about destruction and neglect, but a belief in value did not necessarily correspond to an articulation of what that value is. Moreover, despite this newfound concern for the past, not all shared it, especially those, such as temple officials, who were in dire need of money — why not pawn a statue or painting rather than watch a mob destroy it — for food or maintenance as well as those who quickly learned a central tenet of modernity, self-interest.

More important, this event indicates a growing sense of separation of the present from the past. Things are important because they are old, not because they are tied to some form of belief or spirituality. The materiality of the object or textual data takes precedence over the idea and transmitted knowledge. Buddhist items that lost their connection to previous ideational and political structures were deemed at this moment particularly “worthless,” their materiality as old not yet established. But even in the desire to save there is a nostalgia, a fear of loss that is only possible through recognition that an item is currently of another world. Here the past becomes foreign.¹⁹ It is a separation that is necessary for the production of history.

We must be careful not to confuse this interest in the past with our current knowledge of Japanese history. Indeed, these men have largely been forgotten. I believe that the principal reason for their demise was the lack of history, especially the history of the nation (and East Asia) as we know it today. Their past is not yet nation, national, though it is moving in that direction.²⁰ Ninagawa's invocation of the “foreigner” can at best be read as a lament that Japan is discarding its charming artifacts; the delineation of this past as proof of distinct national cultures — Japan, China, Korea, and so on — is absent. Ninagawa's interest in using artifacts to educate the inhabitants indicates both an early recognition of the importance of the past in fostering support for the new government and the still unformed idea of the nation-state. But, more important, the objects that these men deemed important indicate that the national history had not yet been written.

The principal object of the survey's attention was the Shōshōin of the Tōdaiji, probably because of a connection with the imperial family.²¹

The survey of the Shōshōin, which lasted for twelve days, is indicative of a veneration for old objects not seen throughout its history. From the middle part of the Heian period, the objects in this storehouse had been largely forgotten. Tastes had changed; the Tang culture that such objects represented were passé (*tōi*) having become commonplace from frequency of intercourse as well as a changing style. When they had been remembered since, it was often for a particular object, called an *ōjukkō* (an aromatic wood also known as *ranjattai*) related to an incense-smelling game popular around the Muromachi period. The storehouse had last been opened in 1833. The transformation that the 1872 survey set off is summarized in the introduction to a recent history of the Shōshōin: “It is now always included in history textbooks, and today there is nobody who does not know of the treasures of the Shōshōin. But the attention paid to these treasures is not very old.”²²

The transformation of the Shōshōin is evident in the ceremony convened to open its doors in 1872. It was a great event; Uchida likened the excitement to a wedding ceremony or marriage meeting (*mitai*). Ninagawa's diary records the anticipation; he writes:

We followed the procedure for removing the treasures from storage. Present were Governor Shijo and three lower officials; among the temple priests, one colored robe, three white robes, and six black robes; ten temple officials; and four carpenters and blacksmiths. At the storehouse, the previous day a platform across the front about 1.8 meters deep and a ramp were built. On a stage, the priests lined up on the left and officials on the right; they sat on chairs. After twelve o'clock we commenced the ceremony. A black-robed priest called the *yakushiin* and four carpenters went up to the platform and used a lever to remove the gate bolt from the south door, and then they removed that of the middle and north. And then the head priest (*shiseibō*), wearing a perfumed robe, removed the official temple seal from the lock on the south; next the *yakushiin* removed the bamboo wrapping of the imperial seal from the middle and north. And then Seko [Nobuyo, the imperial envoy] went up, took the imperial seal, and showed it to all. We looked. And then the *yakushiin* took all seals from the lock. And then they inserted the key. And then they opened the door, and everyone entered. They removed ten long boxes, and the temple officials carried them to the head priest. And then they closed the doors as before and removed

the lock. At this time, lots of people came from everywhere to look. A line formed, and they opened the boxes.²³

The continuous use of “and then” (*tsugi*) suggests the careful ritual procedures the priests followed. It also suggests some exasperation at the length of the ceremony; indeed, the sudden attention of many people when the boxes were opened suggests a transformation of meaning whereby the ritual had lost significance. Indeed, it was during the process that Uchida in a conversation with Machida mentioned that his feelings were like those of a wedding ceremony. The priests were conducting the ritual, for the first time in thirty-nine years, as they remembered it. Their ceremony indicated the value of imagination of what is not seen. For the survey team, the value was in knowing and seeing something to be cataloged and displayed.

They were not disappointed when they finally saw the contents. Ninagawa’s account marvels at the craftsmanship of the objects, especially the koto, flutes, go boards, and boxes; they return him to the past, a sense of the eighth century. He writes, “It is sufficient to envision the ancient system (*sei*).”²⁴ But the list of objects is different from today’s standard inventory of important objects from that age; in particular, there are few Buddhist icons. Moreover, in the text I have seen Ninagawa does not distinguish what is Japanese from artifacts from the continent (or even the subcontinent).

The survey culminated three years later with the Nara Exhibition (*Hakurankai*), which was held in Tōdaiji (another survey was conducted to prepare for this exhibition). A phenomenon of the new international world of the latter half of the nineteenth century was the plethora of exhibitions and world’s fairs.²⁵ Indeed, one of the reasons for the 1872 survey was to locate material to send to the world’s fair in Vienna.

Exhibitions were one of the new organizational forms through which culture and technology could be distilled into a presentation for large audiences. Public displays per se were not new, but the purpose was quite different. A key difference was the prevalence of old objects, which were usually displayed with little sense of historical order. Meiji displays were usually public (i.e., sponsored by central and local governments), presented as new, organized by categories rather than ownership, and money making (they charged admission).²⁶ Much of the Nara Exhibition was historical, in particular, artifacts from the Shōsōin and Hōryūji; Ninagawa’s hopes had come to fruition. At last, important objects that had

been seen by so few people could be viewed by the vast public.²⁷ But the purpose of this exhibition, as well as most others, was to encourage industry. Ninagawa also envisioned a connection between artifacts and the production of a new arts industry of export items. In these early years, artlike objects were seen as an important export commodity.

The display of these objects, however, indicates a transformation of past cultural forms. First, the selection of the Tōdaiji represents a new significance: it was a large enclosed site that could contain the exhibition. It no longer possessed the grandeur, spirituality, power, and wealth of the past. It was now a public (i.e., empty) space (the closest thing in 1875 to a convention center) whose meaning depended on the contents of the moment. The exhibition indicates a concern among government officials to preserve important aspects of the past, especially those connected to the imperial family and art objects, such as the register of objects donated by Empress Kōken to the temple and a cushion that had once belonged to Shōtoku Taishi.²⁸ Religious objects did not dominate; most of the objects, especially the large statues that now fill the art history books on Japan, were not included. Those Buddhist icons that were included were bronze statuettes of *kannon* and *nyōrai* that demonstrate the casting skills of Japanese artisans. The more famous of the 140 objects from the Hōryūji included in the exhibit were the Yakushi *nyōrai* from the main hall (*kondō*), the guardians Jikokuten and Tamonten, and the Tamamushi shrine.

Perhaps the best indication of this transformation of meaning is the removal of the Yakushi *nyōrai* from the main hall of the Hōryūji and its display among many other objects in the Tōdaiji as an important artifact of the past. This is a moment in the transformation of icons into aesthetic forms that grounds the process of change. The *nyōrai*, the principal icon of the temple, was separated from that site and resituated in a temporal framework as something old. The separation reflects that contradiction of mobility and stability. Old things (*kyūbutsu*) become a symbol of stability that can ground a rapidly changing society. Moreover, the removal of spirituality from this statue indicates an early stage at which these objects become aesthetic images that speak for an abstract idea, in this case a national past. Though not well framed yet, Ninagawa’s desire to display artifacts in order to inform the masses is an early attempt at this integration of aesthetics into the project on modernity. Lefebvre writes, “Aestheticism accepts the premise that there can be such a thing as an art which can produce constructs and exceptional

moments while remaining in essence external to everyday life. It accepts the premise that this art can penetrate everyday life from outside.”²⁹ The icon was now outside, something for people to see (which was not usually possible in the past), and thus it penetrates the everyday. But it is always outside, both as the distant past and, as will become evident later, because of its connection to abstractions of the nation, the imperial family, or fine art. This separation of the past from the present was important to an emerging idea of the nation-state. It imposed a new concept of time that organized and constrained people into a common framework. It was a concept of the past as “experienced” by all. Those who went to the exhibit saw evidence of the nation-state and experienced the result of a specific sequence of changes that explained the significance of what they had formerly known as a local site.³⁰

The final moment of this discovery, the divestment of the objects from their function, developed out of the exhibition and culminated in 1878.³¹ Chihaya Jōchō, the head priest of Hōryūji, completed negotiations with Machida for the donation of more than 300 objects to the imperial household. In return, the temple received a donation of ten thousand yen. From Chihaya’s point of view, the donation would help avoid the dispersal of the temple’s objects (interestingly, they were now seen as an integral collection), remind the government of the temple’s existence, and restore temple finances.³² In other words, it was necessary to save the temple. All objects were not willingly relinquished; in the early negotiations in 1876, the temple proposed donating 157 objects. The number was increased after a prefectural (Sakai) survey determined that the temple’s buildings were so dilapidated that they could not protect the objects. Some of the meaningful objects included on the final list were shoes placed before the statue of a seated Shōtoku Taishi (in the Shoryōin), the sword from the statue of Mochikuni in the main hall, and a brazier from the five-roofed pagoda. None of the large statues was included.³³ Yet from the viewpoint of Machida the donation was important because it would provide a safe place to store the valued objects; for Chihaya, the donated money would pay for repairs to the main hall (*kon dô*). But preservation in this case meant the restoration of structures of little value (at that time) at the cost of the most valuable objects in the temple’s history, which were shipped to a new museum in Tokyo. It was the beginning of a system in which the nation-state would become the abstract system that determined possession, not only in terms of

physical holding but in the criteria from which the objects gained their meaning.

Discovery Three: Purity and the Temporalization of Space

In the 1880s, research on the history of the archipelago, especially a reevaluation of the past, became quite pronounced. This has often been mistakenly characterized as an anti-Western, neotraditionalist movement. Yet the purpose was little different from that of Machida’s survey of artifacts: to understand the past in order to best develop a linear trajectory of progress and educate the people as nationals. The difference in this period is a transformation in what was valued. This change was part of a strengthening notion of Japan, especially the delineation of what is Japanese, and the gradual separation of Japan from outsiders. History (*rekishi*) became the primary means of effecting this transformation. Old objects, increasingly labeled as art, provided ready data for the “writing” and visualization of that history.

The Hōryūji was a central site in this reconfiguration. It was one of the oldest extant temples, through Buddhism possessed of a history connected to the continent as well as the imperial family, it had contained a wealth of objects, and it was virtually untouched by the destruction of Buddhist icons (*haibutsu kishaku*). In other words, it contained the data required to shift the past from a chronology of kingship (i.e., the patronage of ruling families) to a history of Japan tied to the Eurasian continent.

This shift was marked in 1884 by another commission sponsored by the Meiji government, this time headed by Okakura Tenshin (Kakuzō), Kanō Tessai, and Ernest F. Fenollosa. It is this commission that is usually cited for *the* discovery of the Kannon in the Yumedono of the Hōryūji. Both Okakura and Fenollosa claimed to have been the discoverer, the one who saved Japanese art. Each wrote a history of East Asian art that has had a major impact on the field of East Asian art history. Their overall narratives are very similar, almost the same, but the ways in which they connect Japan to the outside differ. This difference is an indication of a contestation over possession, whether the art of Japan was to serve a national or universalistic (i.e., Western) purpose.³⁴

Fenollosa’s description, which is often phrased to show how he “saved” Japanese art, raises the centrality of aesthetics — fine art — in the

formulation of belief in the nation. Thus, Fenollosa describes his “discovery” of the Guze Kannon (Goddess of Mercy), a seventh-century gilt-wood sculpture:

I had credentials from the central government which enabled me to requisition the opening of godowns and shrines. The central space of the octagonal Yumedono was occupied by a great closed shrine, which ascended like a pillar towards the apex. The priests of the Horiuji confessed that tradition ascribed the contents of the shrine to Corean work of the days of Suiko, but that it had not been opened for more than two hundred years. On fire with the prospect of such a unique treasure, we urged the priests to open it by every argument at our command. They resisted long alleging that in punishment for the sacrifice an earthquake might well destroy the temple. Finally we prevailed, and I shall never forget our feelings as the long disused key rattled in the rusty lock. Within the shrine appeared a tall mass closely wrapped about in swathing bands of cotton cloth, upon which the dust of ages had gathered. It was no light task to unwrap the contents, some 500 yards of cloth having been used, and our eyes and nostrils were in danger of being choked with the pungent dust. . . .

But it was the aesthetic wonders of this work that attracted us most. From the front the figure is not quite so noble, but seen in profile it seemed to rise to the height of archaic Greek art. . . . But the finest feature was the profile view of the head, with its sharp Han nose, its straight clear forehead, and its rather large — almost negroid — lips, on which a quiet mysterious smile played, not unlike Da Vinci’s Mona Lisa’s. Recalling the archaic stiffness of Egyptian Art at its finest, it appeared still finer in the sharpness and individuality of the cutting. In slimmness it was like a Gothic statue from Amiens, but far more peaceful and unified in its single system of lines.³⁵

Of course, this was not the “discovery” of an unknown object despite the rhetorical flourishes. This passage reads differently when one knows that artifacts of this temple were cataloged in 1872 and that many were “donated” to the imperial household in 1878. One of the reasons why the Yumedono was “forgotten” is that it is an eighth-century octagonal structure (not even unique) that had been built in the newer eastern

compound (*tōin*). (The main hall, pagoda, and cloister comprise the western compound, the oldest part of the temple complex.) Like Nina-gawa’s description, multiple pasts are evident, but in Fenollosa’s words a past, Benjamin’s tradition as custom and habit, is replaced by the legacy of anachronistic beliefs. The separation of statues from their former religiosity (we must remember that many had a hand in this, from the locals who participated in the destructive *haibutsu kishaku* movements to those who pawned or sold temple possessions and priests who “willingly complicit” with a call for objects to be preserved and shown in the museum) facilitated this creation of a pure form shorn of previous meaning and open to new interpretations. The discovery of Fenollosa and Okakura completed the separation of the contents from their site; now statues became art, a form judged by its closeness to some pure aesthetic ideal.

It is at this point that the alterity of the past is reintegrated into the community — now as the past of the nation-state — and replaced with the otherness of foreign places. Space is reconceptualized from symbolic spaces to a unit within which subregions are connected directly to a center.³⁶ A narrative of development places a certain past into specific temporal categories that explain the development of the present, that center. In other words, the stabilization of the past — identification of an origin — allows for a comparison with foreign places and temporal developments, reinforcing the past as a national, but now distant, earlier stage of that nation-state. Through Okakura and Fenollosa’s pens, the Hōryūji, or more accurately its statues, represents the originary moment, the Suiko period (552–645), of Japanese art history. Indeed, it becomes the first evidence for a history of Japan. We must remember that the earliest extant Japanese texts date to 710 and 712, the *Kojiki* and the *Nihon shoki*, more than one century after the Hōryūji was built. Okakura proclaims this originary role of the Hōryūji statues: “Without doubt the extant artifacts of the Suiko period are the statues in the Hōryūji.”³⁷ The Hōryūji and the Suiko period have become virtually interchangeable; they signify that early moment, the rise from the primitive to a cultural form. It is the beginning of a narrative of progress: the connection to the continent, the coming of Buddhism, the rise of the Yamato clan, and the formation of organized government (the Taika reforms).

The selection of Buddhist icons for this history marks a significant transition in the valuation of artifacts. Only six years earlier, the objects

displayed at the Nara Exhibition had spanned time from the seventh century through the Tokugawa period; many were religious objects, but most showed the temple's connection to the imperial family. Importantly, the display was composed of objects from the Shōsōin and Hōryūji. But Okakura ignored most of those artifacts, instead focusing on the large Buddhist statuary he identified as belonging to the Suiko period. Old things were displaced for objects tied to a specific, originary era. The objects of the Hōryūji that gain importance are those statues that for various reasons had remained at the temple. Moreover, the elevation of these Buddhist icons (still with their heads) supplanted artifacts more closely tied to the imperial family. Objects from the Shōsōin are now located in a time line as Tenpyō (710–94) artifacts, separating them from the Hōryūji. This is especially interesting when they are placed in the context of the emergence of State Shinto. It seems to mark that contradistinction of modernity, the stable and mobile, now as timeless and timeless. Here spirituality is one of those abstractions that would determine the subjectivity of the nation and establish the grounds for possession of objects. Buddhist icons become historicized, an important example of spirituality in the narrative of national development, while the imperial system becomes sacred and eternal, removed from history.

The explanatory power of this origin is twofold: to establish the ahistorical character of the nation-state and to make connections to the expanded world, both ancient and contemporary. First, one of the paradoxes of the modernity is the simultaneity of mobility and stability—the constant change in a narrative of transformation raises questions, anxieties, and fears brought on by the loss of foundational ideas and symbols. The origin not only marks the first moment of the narrative, but it also reestablishes those fundamental forms. Suiko marks that moment when “Japanese” characteristics—always from or compared to foreign *qua* national objects—become evident.

The key to the discoveries of Okakura and Fenollosa is in the organizing structure, a Hegelian notion of aesthetics that establishes these objects as the fine art of a Japan and connects them to other significant parts of the world: in Fenollosa's case, ancient Egypt and Greece, Han China, Gothic France, and Renaissance Italy; and in Okakura's writings as examples of Japan's superior spirit.³⁸ The temporal markers in Fenollosa's description make possible a comparative narrative that re-enforces the idea of the nation. Okakura's version of the opening of the

Yumedono differs slightly from Fenollosa's in ways that emphasize the nation-state. While acknowledging the former spirituality of the Guze Kannon as a “secret Buddha” (*hibutsu*), he positions it in a superior position to European forms:³⁹ “The sculpture of Greece is something to boast about, but I believe that when contrasted with our art of the Nara period, the latter is not a bit inferior. It is just that the difficulty is in the comparison. In judging the source of ideals in such things as religion and literature, Greece is depictive, Nara is idealistic.”⁴⁰ Nara is both a temporal category of early Japan and a place, a metonym of Japan.⁴¹ Okakura connects these objects to a framework that explained the development of the nation by using Greece (i.e., the West) to reinforce the idea of the nation. Once the parameters of place are established, by placing objects in subsequent temporal periods such as the Nara, which follows Suiko (also called Asuka), Buddhist icons become art objects that are used to demonstrate the development of Japan. Okakura, for example, describes the qualities of later periods as artistically more refined, characterized by influences principally from the Tang and later Song dynasties.

A second change that stabilizes pasts from alter to same is facilitated through the identification of essential characteristics made evident through the careful study of art. Okakura finds a spirituality (Buddhism), a sense of harmony (the naturalism and serenity of the objects), and adaptability (the keen sense of adapting important aspects of foreign cultures and harmoniously assimilating them into one's own). Old things are celebrated for a “patina of age” that Okakura defines through an immanent characteristic, the concept of *kōtan* (refined simplicity), a celebration of a lack of complexity in earlier periods. But spirituality here shifts from Buddhism as a religion to Buddhist icons as a reflection of reverence for nature.⁴² What was once seen as outmoded, is now depicted as evidence of an earlier, fundamental characteristic of the nation.

Harmony is used to occult the simultaneity of mobility and stability. The transformation, learning, and adaptation necessary for a developmental, progressive society potentially indicate a lack of continuity, but harmony demarcates difference along national boundaries that mark indigenous characteristics in juxtaposition with forces of change from the outside. Okakura locates this in an innate characteristic of all Japanese, *yūbi*. In his *Ideals of the East*, he describes this notion of beauty in terms of harmony: “It modified the tilted roofs of Chinese architecture by the delicate curves of the Kasuga style, in Nara. It imposed their feminine refinement on the creations of Fujiwara.” In other words, the

national genius has never been overwhelmed. There has always been abundant energy for the acceptance and reapplication of the influence received, however massive.⁴³ "Proof" of this characteristic is provided by the otherness of the West—gentleness contrasted with harshness, hills with mountains, and rice paddies with oceans.

Finally, adaptability is a corollary of the idea of harmony. Okakura writes of Japan's early contacts with China:

The wars and disruptions of China made our country a sanctuary for her exiles and repository of her art works, and we have deliberately sought her teachings by sending over our scholars from the very earliest times. . . . There has never been any lack of lively national feeling, or of ability to discriminate what suits our peculiarities and to reject the dross.⁴⁴

Here Suiko also serves as the moment that allows the identification and separation of a Japan (note that the nation is now assumed) from China, East Asia, and even ancient Greece. Now Buddhist doctrines and icons—a predominant epistemology of the elite for almost fifteen hundred years—is foreign. He says, "One can say in actuality of the origin of our country's art that a major portion came from foreign countries."⁴⁵ Having such a foreign heritage is not disgraceful; he acknowledges that Japanese culture was coarse and simplistic before cultural interaction. He points to the way in which Western civilization (especially the United States, England, Germany, and France) has incorporated ancient Greece and Rome as its own. According to Okakura, it is inconceivable to discuss the richness of Suiko without reference to Japan's earlier occupation of Mimana (a kingdom on the Korean Peninsula) or its direct contact with the Six Dynasties.⁴⁶

In other words, by harking back to the Six Dynasties Okakura connected the archipelago to Eurasia and also provided for the separation of Japan from China. At that time, Chinese culture was well developed and Japan's was rather primitive. But Japan adopted the best of the continent and had become the repository for this new category of East Asian art. Moreover, the comparison with the formation of the West, especially ancient Greece, is a common strategy of Okakura's: Japan's development was part of the same universal process that explains the rise of Western civilization. The patterns or stages of change are identified by claiming the past of another for oneself through national divisions.

This rather contradictory process is facilitated by slippage in another totalized form that also establishes separation—a unitary "Asiatic"—while feigning unity. The idea of a common Asian culture was also new at this time, made possible by the presence of a West and its category the Orient. Indeed, the above characteristics should each be seen in relation to an idealized notion of the West as rational and competitive. This is evident in the new significance of the Hōryūji as a museum of East Asian culture. Artifacts of East Asian art, Okakura asserts, have largely been destroyed by wars or decayed from neglect. Only Japan has maintained such evidence. He writes, "Japan is a museum of Asiatic civilisation; and yet more than a museum, because the singular genius of the race leads it to dwell on all phases of the ideals of the past, in that spirit of living Advaitism which welcomes the new without losing the old."⁴⁷ Hōryūji possesses the qualities—site of origin, original structures, and an intact collection—that embody and possess a reunited past and present, the Asiatic. Here the temple gains a new sacredness as a museum for the early art pieces of Japan (and thus East Asia); it is important because it housed ancient objects that simultaneously depict the history of Japan and explain Japan's incorporation of the best of Asia. But the lines between Japan as East Asian and East Asia as foreign are quite blurry (and remain so at least up to 1945). Their maintenance relies upon a new faith that an Asia exists—hard to dispute because of its long presence as an idea in the West—and that the histories of its subcultures are and have always been distinctive.

There is a contradiction in this formulation that has troubled subsequent writers—the simultaneity of Asia as both a part of Japan's past and foreign. The resolution was the power of the overarching narrative of a Japanese art that obscured the details of its foreignness. But this operation of elision occurs within the multiple images that statues possess. W. J. T. Mitchell writes, "The true literal image is the mental or spiritual one; the improper, derivative, figurative image is the material shape perceived by our senses, especially the eye."⁴⁸ The potential for two "images," the material and the true, is not new to modern Japan, but there is a change in the relation between the figurative and the true. Whereas the two images were probably closer because they were rarely seen, now the images are displayed. The "true" has shifted from connections to a religious meaning to a likeness of the Japanese character, and because the figurative is tied to impropriety and derivation—the foreignness of the icons, for

example—the priests' recollection that the Guze Kannon came from Korea is deemphasized.

Okakura and Fenollosa did much to return the Hōryūji to a level of importance it had not seen for over a millennium. But it is an importance that is completely different, one that is now priceless for the temple's contents. It reflects the divestment of all meaning previously held by the temple (and its objects) and its replacement with a collection of objects that stand as both an expression of Japanese-ness and a moment in the evolution of Japan. The new framework established the Hōryūji as the metonym for the beginning of Japanese history, the point from which contact was established with the world but also from which an essence of being Japanese can be extracted.

Discovery Four: Repetition and the Sublation of Space to Time

The 1880s and 1890s were decades of considerable historical skepticism and positivistic research. Knowledge of the past that had been handed down for centuries was questioned and exposed as myth. For example, historians disputed Motoori Norinaga's long-accepted interpretation that the location of Yamatai-koku, the kingdom of Wa (Japan) recorded in the *Wei chih*, was in Kyushu. By the end of Meiji, this debate grew into an institutional rivalry between the history departments of the Imperial Universities of Tokyo and Kyoto, the former promoting Kyushu and the latter Yamato. This debate was part of a general historical inquiry that would lead to the writing of a "proper" history of Japan. Modernity, paradoxically, needs the past; the nation-state must locate its origins, explain its connections to other areas, and explicate its development (or lack thereof).

The problem in this debate (as in all debates over origins) was the realization that textual data, the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*, are unreliable and empirical data on protohistoric society are needed. As I have shown, some artifacts, now constituted as art, were emptied of previous signifiers and became important historical data. But this reorientation did not yet extend to ancient architecture, especially shrines and temples such as the Hōkōji, Shitennōji, Hōrinji, and Hōryūji, that predates extant written texts. In contrast to the recognition increasingly accorded to selected items among their contents, these old structures, though no longer being torn down, sold, or burned, were suffering from considerable neglect.

Indeed, in the case of the Hōryūji the poor condition of the buildings was cited as a reason to remove more artifacts to the imperial household than originally planned.

A key event in the changing attitude toward these old buildings occurred in October 1893 with Itō Chuta's lecture on the architecture of the Hōryūji, the last "discovery" of that temple.⁴⁹ Itō investigated the Hōryūji as a graduate student at the Imperial University (Tokyo) under the supervision of Tatsunō Kingo. The significance of this discovery is in the incorporation of architecture into the narrative of Japanese history and art history: the progressive narrative of architectural history repeated, thus further authorizing, the developmental narratives of Okakura and Fenollosa; and, second, it brought spatial forms back into the social orbit, though now as a site that is only significant in relation to temporal categories.

Itō proclaimed the Hōryūji to be the most important historical building in Japan: "When searching for the most remarkable lineage, the oldest, and most superb construction among our country's architecture, without hesitation, the first about which the public should know is the Hōryūji *garan* [the western complex, comprising of the main hall, pagoda, cloister, and gate] in Yamato. It is certainly no exaggeration to declare the Hōryūji *garan* as this country's most valuable ancient architecture."⁵⁰ It was not the first Buddhist temple built nor the oldest extant building. But it was believed to be the oldest complex to have survived relatively intact; temple history claimed that the main complex was originally built in 607. The importance of originality was also tied to the separated past that was now representing stability in modern society. Itō continues, "Only our Hōryūji has not altered its old appearance; thus, we can experience the beauty of over a thousand years, come to understand the ancient sages, and see the true beauty in the antique patina, novel forms, and original methods."⁵¹ Here it is important to remember that prior to the Meiji the most powerful temples and shrines, such as the Kōfukuji and Ise, were rebuilt periodically as an indication of their power, wealth, and importance.

Subsequently, in December 1897 a commission on the preservation of old buildings identified twenty for preservation and recorded sixty objects as national treasures.⁵² This, however, was not the first recognition of or attempt to preserve buildings; in 1880, the Ministry of Home Affairs had established a capital fund for the preservation of cultural resources (*bunkazai*) and old things (*furumono*). Most temples and

shrines received small grants, hardly enough to begin basic repairs let alone restoration; the two largest disbursements, 2,400 yen, went to the Tamunomine Shrine and the Hōryūji.

Itō recognized that he was not the first to bring the temple to the attention of the modern public. In a rather backhanded way, he acknowledges the contributions of foreigners such as Fenollosa and Bigelow; he says that the temple's fame rose "in part from a strange, twisted interpretation produced from their curiosity and in part from careful examination of their new discovery."⁵³ This fame, he argues, resulted from the attention accorded to the extraordinary sculptures, but it also demonstrates a devaluation of the temple itself. This devaluation is evident in Itō's first encounter, which provides quite a contrast to Fenollosa's impression.

When one arrives at Hōryūji and first faces the south gate (*nandaimon*), there is a dignity that has not succumbed to the deep wounds from battling hundreds of years of rain and dew. The roof is like the open wings of a phoenix, and its curve resembles the powerful footprint of a lion. But, upon entering the gate and visiting the office, its considerable dilapidation becomes evident. Floors are rotten, and weeds are sprouting up; pillars are decayed, and a strange fungus is apparent. The pitiable head priest, Chihaya, is blind in both eyes and greets us from his sickbed. The haggard monk solitarily defends the desolate temple. When one enters the compound (*garan*), the unparalleled craftsmanship of long ago, the Asuka [Suiko] period, is relived: the wonderful beauty of the layout of the gate, corridors, main hall, and pagoda tower; the indescribably noble style of that form; and the remarkable design of the columns, bracketing, rafters, curved railing, and so on. But, unless one seriously undertakes repairs, the damage will lead to a sorrowful state — the columns will bend and lean, the main hall will fall into ruins, sacred objects will scatter, and the tower will collapse — like when the cranes leave.⁵⁴

We should remember that when Itō visited the temple, Chihaya had already embarked upon repairs, using the funds from the donation of artifacts to the imperial household and from the Ministry of Home Affairs. This was the condition of the temple after some repairs!

Its condition notwithstanding, Itō compared the temple to the Parthenon of ancient Greece. Like Okakura and Fenollosa, he suggested a Eurasian connection as far west as ancient Greece. (In 1902, he began a

three-year journey on a donkey from Peking to Istanbul to trace this development, specifically of Buddhist architecture.) And, like his predecessors, he used a progressive time of cultural development that naturalized the nation while showing interaction with the continent. A major difference between his narrative and Okakura's is the reintegration of nature (as environment) into this history. In other words, architecture provides the means with which to reintegrate space as a stable form in the mobility of time — progress.

Itō argued that the Hōryūji is located at the crossroads of pre- or protohistory and history (or History). He acknowledges over a thousand years of rule since the age of the gods, but he complains that this society lived in darkness, that "everything, everyone was in a perpetual sleep, as if dead." This condition is evident in architecture (more accurately, what he imagined it to be). In its primitive state, architecture in Japan reflects a simple society, the "perpetual sleep, as if dead." Buildings in Japan ward off the rain and dew; materials were natural, wood and bamboo. The shrines of Ise and Izumo are the closest to this early, primitive state. Then, "like a flash of lightening from the west, this darkness was lifted, and the realm for the first time became light. Everywhere people rose from their slumber and became active. This was the arrival of Buddhism."⁵⁵ At this time, it was not embarrassing, as it would become later, to admit that early inhabitants, indeed, the mythical rulers, were primitive. After the introduction of Buddhism, architecture changed: "In our country architecture (*kenchikujuutsu*) actually began after the arrival of Buddhism, and we can say that the Suiko style is the origin of our country's architecture."⁵⁶ Buildings were larger, materials were manufactured, and colors (ornamentation) were added. The imposing structures created a sense of adoration/admiration well beyond their functional requirements.⁵⁷ As in art, the architecture of Suiko became that ordinary moment, now as the first architectural style (*ryūha*) or the outset (*hekitō*) of Japanese architectural history that demonstrates transformation and immanence. (Interestingly, the Shinto shrines, Ise and Izumo, are omitted.)⁵⁸ Like Okakura, the central premise of Itō's narrative of progress is the need for occasional interchange with outside cultures. But in this case, rather than basing change on the abstract conceptual structure of the Hegelian idea, Itō grounds it in nature, the moment of man's separation from nature in Japan.

This delineation of interaction refines the notions of inside and outside and change and immanence, the problem of Asia as both the

same as and foreign to Japan that is evident in Okakura. Itō uses the analogy of child rearing to naturalize categories of indigenous, Chinese, and Western. The child, he argues, learns much from teachers and friends, not just from one's parents. If one learns only from the latter, then there would be little change in one's character, that is, little development. Teachers and friends represent the outside world. Without education, one is always a child. Without the outside world, architecture does not change, a point proven in Itō's mind by looking at inner African aborigines and Eskimos—always the child. In architecture, it means to use the supply of materials, adopt what is suitable using the “knowledge and natural talents of the people (*kokumin*),” and gain new skills through training.⁵⁹ As the metaphor of the child suggests, there is also something essential and unique in the child. He states:

It goes without saying that architecture, the architecture of a certain country, emerges from the conditions of that country's topography (*tochi*)—in other words, what I call the national land (*kokudo*)—and the needs of the humans that live in that land—what I call the nationals (*kokumin*). Of course, in each region of the world there is no place where the conditions of the national land is the same. . . . To use a metaphor of human life, children are born from a father and mother and no child is exactly the same. The architecture, the baby, which is born from the national land as mother and the nationals as father, is different throughout the world and none are the same. . . . In other words, in Japan there is what one calls a unique (*tokushoku*) Japanese architecture, and naturally (*tōzen*) it is different from the architecture of China and the architecture of Europe. . . . [T]his is the way the gods have made us. In other words, Japanese architecture is eternally (*eikyū*) Japanese architecture; it will not turn into foreign architecture.⁶⁰

The similarities to Okakura's history are obvious. We need only recall the status of these objects in the mid-1870s to see the transformation that had occurred. Near the end of the nineteenth century, an understanding of a historical past was emerging, one that made good use of tropes of modernity that occlude its own historicity. The idea of the nation is naturalized in several ways. First, the idea of change necessitates a baseline, nature, which is now confined to a series of fixed conceptual (national) spheres. It is located in an originary moment,

grounded in connections to (and separation from) the natural world, and explained through the human body. The discussion of change, growth, and interaction, while located in the certainty of the human body, is a powerful analogy frequently found in progressive frameworks. But this change and these very aspects facilitate the naturalization of a space endowed with certain immutable characteristics that are removed from the realm of history. The argument is circular, but, because it is located in unquestioned (national) concepts, the conceived is conflated with the phenomenal but in a way in which the former defines the latter. As with the power of icons, the truth resides in an abstraction, not what is readily visible.

Within this structure, the logic of nation and East Asia remains unquestioned. History removes its own historicity from contestation; the nation only develops through interaction with outsiders here, on the Eurasian continent. This progressive scheme is central to the inversion of relations between the archipelago and the continent. Itō acknowledges the superiority of Chinese culture (the Six Dynasties) over Japan. But this superior culture is turned around to indicate connection and difference: “However, we should observe that the aesthetics of oriental architecture have separately opened up a common universe [heaven and earth, *kenkon*], and within the architectural world demonstrated a new art form.” The “oriental” is never really defined; moreover, Chinese culture now stands in for Buddhist forms and ideas. That new art form is that of Japan; in the process of adaptation, it took a middle path, not opting for the grand, the ornate, or an esoteric transformation. In other words, it took the best of the East and adapted it to its needs. But this is not an innocent exercise in self-understanding; it also entails possession of connections and relations with others. Itō writes:

In looking for representative examples of such architecture, in Korea all the temples have been destroyed, the region of Inner Asia has long been in decay, and Greek temples are too varied in their connection. Fortunately, today Suiko architecture, which reached the pinnacle of the eave style, is isolated gloomily in a cold village named Hōryūji in the region of the old capital, Nara. The village received its name from this complex. In other words, the true value for the architectural world is actually here in Hōryūji. In its form, the desires of the Chinese style are clearly evident. There are faint reminders of the traditions of an Indian style, and the vestiges of a Greek style remain;

thus, interest [in the temple] is gradually increasing. Clearly, this is the role of the Hōryūji in the architectural world.⁶¹

In this narrative the Hōryūji undergoes another transformation as the model of Suiko architecture. The bulk of Itō's article discusses in detail the key architectural features that identify the Hōryūji as characteristic of the Suiko style. He listed twenty-four features that set it off from temples representative of later styles in the Tenchi (Hakuhō) and Tenpyō eras. Beginning in the seventh century (645) Tenchi was indicative of a changing influence, from the Six Dynasties to Tang culture. When Itō discusses other temples of this style, the three-story pagodas of the Hōrinji and the Hōkiji, an interesting shift occurs: the Hōryūji becomes that standard by which these earlier temples are judged. There was some uncertainty at this time as to whether these pagodas originally had five stories or three. Nevertheless, Itō says that their forms and techniques place them on the same plane as the Hōryūji.⁶² He also mentions the Shitennōji as being clearly Suiko (built by Shōtoku) but ends by noting that some parts, the overall form and details, were changed by later generations. Interestingly, the Hōryūji becomes the standard by which the other temples of Suiko are measured. Even though the pagodas were built prior to the Hōryūji, the latter is the standard for comparison, and Itō also claimed in a note that the layout of the Shitennōji is very strange.⁶³ In other words, the Hōryūji has been transformed from datum to model.

This shift is common in history. Yet it is remarkable in the context of discussions on the nation in which beliefs about the nation often persist despite empirical data to the contrary. This is true of the Hōryūji. We now know that the current structures were not built during the Suiko period; indeed, they are not even on the original site, nor do they have the same layout as the original. Yet the temple retains its position as the founding moment, the Suiko style.

Until 1938, scholars engaged in an often heated debate over the period in which the existing *garan* of the Hōryūji was actually built. The implications could have questioned the temple's newfound archetypal status. Contradictory evidence existed that the main temple complex, the *garan*, had been destroyed by fire in the seventh century and rebuilt. Until the Meiji period, most people accepted (if they cared at all) the official temple account that the *garan*, though repaired and restored, was original. Yet numerous textual accounts suggest conflagration; for ex-

ample, a passage in the *Nihon shoki* mentions that the temple at Hōryūji was completely burned in 670, while the *Jōgū Shōtoku Taishi-den Hoke-isuki*, a biography of Shōtoku Taishi, reported a fire at Ikarugadera in 610.⁶⁴ Around the 1890s scholars such as Suga Masatomo and Okakura argued that the *Nihon shoki* could not be ignored, and most agreed that the temple did burn and was probably rebuilt around 707. Yet architectural evidence suggested that the temple, clearly different from the eighth-century temples influenced by Tang China, could not have been rebuilt in what would have been an anachronistic style, and in 1905 two scholars, Sekino Tadashi and Hirako Takurei, separately wrote essays arguing that the Hōryūji is indeed original and could not have been rebuilt. One of the strongest points of Sekino's argument was the use of the Koma shaku (a unit of measure from Kokuri, one of the ancient kingdoms on the Korean Peninsula) in the existing structure. He argued that because the principal unit of measure was changed to the Tang shaku in the Taika reforms (645) the Hōryūji could not have burned and been rebuilt with an anachronistic measure.

In 1938, archaeologists uncovered the remains of the Wakagusadera. For decades, scholars had debated, ignored, conflated the names used for the Hōryūji, Wakagusadera, Ikarugadera, and Hōryū gaku-monji. Texts are ambiguous and often merit their conflation. The discovery of the remains of the *garan* of the Wakagusadera to the southeast of the present *garan*, however, proved the existence of an earlier temple that had been destroyed by fire. Interestingly, the layout of this temple was the same as that of the Shitennōji, called strange by Itō when comparing it to the Hōryūji. Since this discovery (as well as evidence found during the restoration project in the 1930s), few have disputed the notion that the *garan* of the Hōryūji does not date to 607. Current scholarship dates the rebuilding to the end of the seventh century.

Interestingly, this locates the architecture of the Hōryūji in the middle of the Nara not the Suiko period. Indeed, there is no extant temple complex of Suiko architecture. Yet many books still describe it as an example of Suiko style; the originary role of the temple lives on. Now it is important because it is old, very old. It rightfully belongs in the early moments of narratives of Buddhist architecture. But these narratives are interesting: while the text often acknowledges this archaeological evidence, the overall narrative maintains the position of Hōryūji as in the Suiko style, as if it had been built in 607. The power, or "true," is more

in the connection to what is not seen, as a likeness of an ideal, than in phenomenal (figurative) data.

Epilogue

In 1919, Watsuji Tetsurō published *Koji junrei*, his ruminations and impressions of a pilgrimage to Nara. This text proved to be immensely popular, and, as if produced in the advertising offices of Tsukiji, it generated ridership for the new railway lines in Yamato. Watsuji's text achieved the early aspirations of Ninagawa and Machida in the 1870s but with an accumulation of knowledge and repetition of narrative frameworks of their successors. His description is filled with now familiar comparisons, the columns whose entasis is similar to that of Greek temples, the distinct curve of the roof compared to temples of Tenpyō (such as the Toshōdaiji), the statues of Suiko compared to those of the Fujiwara period, and Fenollosa's *Mona Lisa*.

Watsuji's discussion of Fenollosa is instructive. It exhibits his acceptance of the hagiography that has emerged, of Fenollosa (Watsuji does not mention Okakura) as the discoverer of the Guze (Yumedono) Kannon and the savior of Japanese art. The repetition, the narrative of art history codified by Fenollosa, is evident, as is the struggle for possession. Watsuji does not agree with Fenollosa's analogies; in particular, he is wont to point to the complexity and physicality of the West evident through the *Mona Lisa* in comparison with the simplicity and transcendence of the Kannon. He writes that the *Mona Lisa*, produced in a climate of spiritual unrest and fear where there is a separation of body and mind, expresses human hope and darkness, whereas the Kannon, produced in a climate of simple spiritual needs where body and mind were unified, expresses a freedom produced from deep meditation. In other words, the Kannon is more transcendent and closer to some kind of purity, "a mysteriousness difficult to describe."⁶⁵

Watsuji questions other comparisons in Fenollosa's moment of discovery: he denies any connection to Egyptian sculpture; accepts an eerie similarity between the Gothic statues of Amiens and the Kannon, which he attributes to a religiosity of a *young nation* [italics original] (*wakai minzoku*); and he virtually denies the Korean influence on this early art and architecture. Watsuji's passage shows the further domestication of the temple. He is further removing it from direct comparisons with the West, instead retaining (and relying upon) an implicit otherness. The

Kannon is more simple, meditative, and transcendent than anything in Europe. It is also Japanese, not Korean.

By 1919, the Hōryūji had come full circle: from a temple of the political elite; to a relatively forgotten regional place; and by the Taisho period, having survived the ravages of the destruction of bodhisattvas, to a spiritual site as the origin of an interpretive structure of the nation-state that could be experienced through the growing tourist industry. This site is an archetype of the spirituality of the national past so stable that data that contradict it cannot destabilize it. Perhaps now, in an age of constantly shifting meanings and forms, the temple has attained a stability beyond any period when it possessed a function as a religious site. Watsuji begins his encounter with the Hōryūji as follows:

On the following day, Mr. F. and I set out in the morning for the Hōryūji. The weather was beautiful, and we were in good spirits. From the [rail] stop for the Hōryūji, we proceeded about a mile to the village along a farm road, and as we got closer we could clearly see the five-roofed pagoda. Our hearts danced, and we became happier and happier; it was an exhilarating feeling.⁶⁶

NOTES

I am thankful to Kevin M. Doak for the topic of this chapter; he refused my initial suggestions and accepted a topic that at the time was only a faint idea. Doug Howland, Masao Miyoshi, Suzuki Hiroshi, and Eiji Yutani provided important help and suggestions that kept me on track.

1. As early as the eighth century, though still listed as one of the seven great temples of Nara, the prestige and patronage of the Hōryūji was declining, having been eclipsed by the Tōdaiji.

2. Henri Lefebvre, *Introduction to Modernity*, trans. John Moore (London: Verso, 1995), 224.

3. Peter Osborne, *The Politics of Time: Modernity and the Avant-Garde* (London: Verso, 1995), 134–35.

4. Takada Ryoshin, *Hōryūji no nazo to hiwa* (Tokyo: Shōgakkan, 1993), 22.

5. In comparison, the Kōfukuji received more than 15,160 koku, the Tōdaiji 3,115 koku, and the Tōshōdaiji, Saidaiji, and Yakushiji 300 koku each (ibid., 19–20).

6. F. Kornicki, "Edo no kaichō," in Kitamura Gyōon, ed., *Kinsei kaichō no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Meicho Shuppan, 1989). Enterprize was not new to the Hōryūji priests in the Edo period. In the sixteenth century, they sold the contracts

of some dependent cultivators (*myōshushiki*) on temple lands (Ikaruga no shō) to samurai, though because the peasants protested the temple was forced to return the money. See Katsumata Shizuo, *Ikki* (Tokyo: Iwanami, 1982), 139–40.

7. This law is usually translated as the Law Separating Buddhism and Shinto. I have instead followed Allan Grapard's practice, which recognizes the syncretism of what we now separate as two distinct religions. See Allan G. Grapard, *Protocol of the Gods* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).

8. James Ketelaar describes the discovery of a graveyard of decapitated Buddhist statues in Kyushu. It has now been turned into a local shrine, the Hall of the Headless Kannon (*Of Heretics and Martyrs in Meiji Japan: Buddhism and Its Persecution* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990], 57).

9. Murakami Senjō, Tsuji Zennosuke, and Washio Junkei, *Meiji ishin shinbutsu bunri shiryō*, vol. 2 (Tokyo: Tōhō shoin, 1921), 171–73.

10. In contrast to 104 pages of material on the Kōfukuji in *ibid.*, the five pages on the Hōryūji were essentially speculation as to why it did not suffer much damage. Murakami et al. suggest that in addition to the connection of Shōtoku Taishi to the imperial line the tutelary deity of the Hōryūji was not on the temple premises.

11. Takada Ryōshin, *Hōryūji*, vol. 1, *Rekishi to kobunken* (Osaka: Hōikusha, 1987), 88.

12. Nara Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan, ed., *Nara kokuritsu hakubutsukan hyakunen no ayumi* (Nara: Nara kokuritsu hakubutsukan, 1996), 6.

13. Tokyo kokuritsu hakubutsukan, ed., *Tokyo kokuritsu hakubutsukan hyakunenshi* (Tokyo: Tokyo kokuritsu hakubutsukan, 1973), 73–74 (hereafter TKH100). Many of the site visits were rushed (including those to the Shōsōin and Hōryūji) because the leaders had to return to Tokyo to participate in the decision on the location of the proposed national museum. In addition to Ueno, Oji was being considered.

14. Other members of this team were Kashiwagi Masanori, who copied text; Yokoyama Matsusaburo, who photographed objects; Kasakura Tetsunosuke; and painter Takahashi Yūichi.

15. Drawing from Henri Meschonnic, Osborne writes, "Modernity," then, has no fixed, objective referent. 'It has only a subject, of which it is full.' It is the product, in the instance of each utterance, of an act of historical self-definition through *differentiation, identification and projection*, which transcends the order of chronology in the construction of a meaningful present" (*Politics of Time*, 14).

16. TKH100, 75.

17. *Ibid.*, 77. Much of the information from this survey derives from Ninagawa's unpublished diary, "Nara no settō." See also Christine M. E. Guth, *Art, Tea, and Industry: Masuda Takashi and the Mitsui Circle* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 100–109.

18. See Reinhart Koselleck's account on the rise of *Geschichte* from *histoire* in his *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*, trans. Keith Tribe (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1985), 21–38.

19. David Lowenthal, *The Past Is a Foreign Country* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 1985.

20. TKH100, 74–75.

21. Even though they did visit the Hōryūji, little has been written about that visit; see, for example, *ibid.* Interestingly, a recent history of the Hōryūji omits this survey, instead emphasizing the resourcefulness and resolve of the head priest at that difficult time. See Takada Ryōshin, *Hōryūji senyōhyakunen* (Tokyo: Shinchosha, 1994), 89. The desire to tie the past to the emperor is parallel to the rituals and pageants described by Takashi Fujitani that turned the emperor into the public centerpiece of the nation (*Splendid Monarchy: Power and Pageantry in Modern Japan* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996]).

22. NHK Shōsōin Purojekuto. *Dokuyumento Shōsōin: 1200 nen no tobira ga hirakareta* (Tokyo: Nihon hōshō shuppan kyōkai, 1990), 178.

23. THK100, 80.

24. NHK Shōsōin Purojekuto, *Dokuyumento Shōsōin*, 183–84 (the quote from 184).

25. See for example, Robert W. Rydell, *All the World's a Fair: Visions of Empire at American International Exhibitions, 1876–1916* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984). For the transformation of public displays during the Meiji, see F. Kornicki, "Public Display and Changing Values: Early Meiji Exhibitions and Their Precursors," *Monumenta Nipponica* 49, no. 2 (1994): 167–96; and Yoshimi Shunya, *Hakurankai no seijigaku: manazashi no kindai* (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1992).

26. Kornicki, "Public Display."

27. NHK Shōsōin Purojekuto, *Dokuyumento Shōsōin*, 185.

28. Tokyo kokuritsu hakubutsukan, *Hōryūji kenidō honjō mokuroku* (Tokyo: Tokyo Hakubutsukan, 1959), 4.

29. Lefebvre, *Introduction to Modernity*, 216.

30. Norbert Elias, *Time: An Essay*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), 28ff., 76–80.

31. For a discussion of the relation between the function and subjectivity of a divested object, see Jean Baudrillard, "The System of Collecting," in *The Cultures of Collecting*, edited by John Elsner and Roger Cardinal (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994).

32. Takada, *Hōryūji senyōhyakunen*.

33. For a list of the donations, see Tokyo kokuritsu hakubutsukan, *Hōryūji kenidō*.

34. See my "Imaging History: Inscribing Belief in the Nation," *Journal of Asian Studies* 53 (February 1994): 24–44.

35. Ernest F. Fenollosa, *Epochs of Chinese and Japanese Art*, vol. 1 (New York: Frederick A. Stokes, 1911), 50–51.

36. Yi-fu Tuan, *Passing Strange and Wonderful: Aesthetics, Nature, and Culture* (New York: Kodansha, 1995).

37. Okakura Tenshin, *Nihon bijutsushi*, in *Okakura Tenshin zenshū*, vol. 4 (Tokyo: Rokugeisha, 1939), 47.

38. Hegel's history is but one of many linear frameworks from which Japanese intellectuals drew.

40 Kawashima, "Kindai nihon no shakai kagakuteki kenkyō." For Hall's disappointment and dismissal, see his "Changing Conceptions of the Modernization of Japan," 26-28.

41 Hall, "Changing Conceptions of the Modernization of Japan," 11.

42 Robert Ward later explained that sometimes authoritarian and oligarchic rule is a necessary expedient to get to the ultimate end of a liberal government (i.e., democracy), a chilling reminder of Naitō Konan's metaphor of an irrigation ditch, arguing that sometimes violence is a necessary expedient to correct obstinate (and ignorant) obstacles. Robert E. Ward, "Epilogue," in *Political Development in Modern Japan*, ed. Robert E. Ward (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), 588. For Naitō's statement see his *Shinshinaron*, in *Naitō Konan zenshō*, vol. 5 (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō), 514.

43 Koselleck, *Futures Past*, xxiv.

44 *Ibid.*, 14.

45 Reischauer, "Tozai 'kangaekata'."

46 Tōyama, "Kokusai kaigi no muzukashisa."

47 Hall, "Changing Conceptions of the Modernization of Japan," 38.

48 See above for his work in *sekaishi* which did attempt to address the multiple temporalities present in global change.

49 A similar elision seems to be occurring today, where the work of Harootyan and Najita seem to be overlooked in historiography of modern (not premodern) Japan. See Narita Ryuichi and a recent article in *Le Monde* (March 14, 1997). Pierre-François Souyri "Dynamisme de l'historiographie japonaise aux Etats-Unis."

50 For a critique of Marxist historiography that is limited to economics, see Kozo Yamamura.

51 He did not respond directly to Inoue's quite critical (and one should add much more sophisticated) comments on modernization theory in the following years.

52 Maruyama Masao, "Patterns of Individuation and the Case of Japan: A Conceptual Scheme," in *Changing Japanese Attitudes toward Modernization*, ed. Marius Jansen (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), 490-91.

53 Ronarudo P. Dōa, "Kokusai kaigi no muzukashisa," *Mainichi shinbun*, 10 Sept. 1960.

54 The following meetings and their organizers were: Marius Jansen, January 1962, Bermuda; William W. Lockwood, June 1963, Colorado; Ronald P. Dore, January 1963, Bermuda; Robert E. Ward, January 1965, Bermuda; Donald H. Shively, January 1966, Puerto Rico; James W. Morley, January 1968, Puerto Rico. An "informal meeting" which today is called a workshop was held in January 1967 in Bermuda as a follow-up to the conference. This meeting led to the formation of the Joint Committee on Japanese Studies of the American Council for Learned Societies and the Social Science Research Council.

55 Tōyama, "Sekaishi ni okeru chuikishi no mondai."

56 *Ibid.*, 251.

57 *Ibid.*, 252.

58 de Certeau, *The Writing of History*, 21.

Theory, Area Studies, Cultural Studies: Issues of Pedagogy in Multiculturalism

Rey Chow

I would say that there is no future for literary studies as such in the United States. Increasingly, those students are being taken over by the astonishing garbage called "cultural criticism."—Harold Bloom, cited in Shulman 1994: 75

Unfortunately, the negative view toward cultural studies expressed by Harold Bloom is not unique to him. It is shared by many teachers of the humanities in North America, in particular the United States. What is perhaps peculiar about such openly negative sentiments toward cultural studies is that they often come from those who, during the 1960s and 1970s, were staunch promoters and defenders of what is called "theory," when theory itself was derogated and attacked by reactionary humanists as some metaphysical garbage that found its way from continental Europe to the higher education sectors of North American society.¹ Arguments against theory then sounded similar to the arguments against cultural studies today, not in the least by way of the charge that theory, by paying attention to the ideological assumptions that lie behind language, text, and discourse, was introducing issues that were, properly speaking, not about (the intrinsic qualities of) literature itself but instead about philosophy, sociology, and so forth. Twenty some years later, many of those who took pride in the race for theory are precisely the ones who back away from cultural studies. Why?

Genealogical Affinities between Theory and Cultural Studies

The brief history of cultural studies—its origins in the class-conscious analyses of popular culture in England, in particular the work undertaken at the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at Birmingham, its subsequent migration to the United States and elsewhere, a migration that is accompanied by the concomitant forces of "French theory" and "Anglo-American" feminism and . . .

39. The *hibutsu* were often the most sacred objects of worship in a temple, shown rarely to enhance their importance. See Donald McCallum, *Zenkōji and Its Icon: A Study in Medieval Japanese Religious Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).

40. Okakura, *Nihon bijiusushi*, 79.

41. In the chronologies used in art history, the Nara period generally extends from 645 to 794 and is divided into the Hakuho (645–710) and Tenpyō (710–94).

42. Okakura, *Nihon bijiusushi*, 86, 263, 172.

43. Okakura Kakuzō, *Ideals of the East* (Rutland, VT: Tuttle, [1903] 1970), 19.

44. Okakura Kakuzō, "Japanese Temples and Their Treasures," in *Collected English Writings*, vol. 2 (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1984), 257.

45. Okakura, *Nihon bijiusushi*, 17.

46. At this moment in the nascent historiography of Japan, Korea could still be the more advanced country. Okakura acknowledged that Chinese culture had reached ancient Korea before continuing on the archipelago. He writes that the Chinese considered it the *takarakuji* (country of jewels) and that Jingū sent an expedition because of this wealth. Japanese went over, and through Korea they learned more and more of China. By the end of the occupation of Korea, they had surpassed Korean culture (*ibid.*, 17–19).

47. Okakura, *Ideals*, 7–8.

48. W. J. T. Mitchell, *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 32.

49. Itō published this lecture in the November issue of the journal *Kenchiku zasshi*, and it was revised in 1898. See Itō Chuta, "Hōryūji Kenchikuron," *Tokyo teikoku daigaku kiyo* 1 (1898): 1–176. I have relied on this latter version.

50. *Ibid.*, 1.

51. *Ibid.*, 175–76.

52. *Nara kokuritsu*, 126–27.

53. Itō, "Hōryūji Kenchikuron," 1.

54. Itō Chuta, "Hōryūji hōmonki," in *Ronsō zuihitsu, manpitsu* (Tokyo: Hana Shobō, 1982), 642.

55. Itō, "Hōryūji Kenchikuron," 174.

56. *Ibid.*, 175.

57. *Ibid.*, 174–75.

58. Isezaki Arata argues that Ise, as we know it today, is not an example of pure Japanese architecture that existed prior to the influence of Buddhism. He points out that the rituals that connect the imperium and the gods was established in the late seventh and early eighth centuries ("Ise: shigen no modoki," in *Shigen no modoki* (Tokyo: Kagoshima Shuppankai, 1996).

59. Itō Chuta, *Nihon kenchiku no hensen* (Tokyo: Keimeikai, 1934), 18.

60. *Ibid.*, 6–7.

61. Itō, "Hōryūji Kenchikuron," 9.

62. *Ibid.*, 169.

63. *Ibid.*, 170.

64. I have reduced this rather heated and complex debate to very basic components. For more detailed information, see Murata Jirō, *Hōryūji no kenkyūshi* (Osaka: Mainichi Shimbunsha, 1949). In English, see Alexander Coburn Soper III, *The Evolution of Buddhist Architecture in Japan* (New York: Hacker Art Books, [1942] 1978); and Machida Kōichi, "A Historical Survey of the Controversy as to Whether the Hōryū-ji Was Rebuilt or Not," *Acta Asiatica* 15 (1968): 87–115.

65. Watsuji Tetsurō, "Kōji junrei," in *Watsuji Tetsurō zenshū* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1961), 184–85.

66. *Ibid.*, 165.