

Transnationalism and American Studies in Place

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When George Lipsitz proclaimed, in 2001, that the field of American studies was “in a moment of danger,” he demonstrated once again the cultural power of the jeremiad that has shaped this academic enterprise since its emergence in the first half of the twentieth century.¹ To a significant degree, the intellectual vigor of American studies arises from its never-ending habit of self-reflection and critique. Since the 1960s, three successive and inter-related crises have challenged American studies practitioners to rethink our most fundamental assumptions about our area of scholarship. The first directly challenged the consensus-oriented myth-and-symbol school that achieved its apex in the 1950s, by turning attention from a homogeneous “American mind” to a rich proliferation of “minority” histories, literatures, and cultures, exploring the seemingly infinite variety of identities shaped by social class, race and ethnicity, gender and sexuality, and, most recently, physical ability. The second responded to Benedict Anderson’s concept of the nation as “imagined community” by exploring the fictive qualities of American bourgeois nationalism, with special attention to American exceptionalism, and to the ways in which “American national identity has been produced precisely in opposition to, and therefore in relationship with, that which it

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excludes or subordinates.”² And the third has registered a growing awareness of how globalization has “disrupted the isomorphism of culture and place, giving new meaning to national and transnational identities,” and raising questions about what a postnational American studies would require of us.³

The question we now face is, then, what should be our purview? If we no longer see the nation-state as a neatly bounded container for a unified and meaningful national culture, then to what alternative containers or networks should we turn? This was the central concern of Jan Radway’s 1998 presidential address to the American Studies Association, “What’s in a Name?” which pointed out that she was presiding over “an association whose very name still so powerfully evokes the ghostly presence of a fantasmatic, intensely longed-for, unitary American culture.” Radway critically examined three alternative names for “American studies”—United States studies, Inter-American studies, and intercultural studies—and concluded that while the American Studies Association’s name might be retained, its members should adopt “new forms of bifocal vision, a capacity to attend simultaneously to the local and the global as they are intricately intertwined.”⁴ Conspicuous in its absence here is the national. Radway and other leading American studies scholars have echoed historian Prasenjit Duara’s summons to “rescue history from the nation” (his title for a study of early twentieth-century nationalisms in China and India).⁵ This summons is particularly compelling to historians, because of our long-time complicity in inventing and fostering the idea of nationalism, and the ongoing service that nationalism has done for us, in turn, by providing us with employment. As Eric Hobsbawm pointed out, “Historians are to nationalism what poppy-growers in Pakistan are to heroin-addicts: we supply the essential raw material for the market.”⁶

Much recent American studies scholarship has responded to Prasenjit Duara’s call with transnational work. The international symposium on “Framing American Studies in Trans-Pacific Perspective” hosted by the Japanese Association of American Studies (June 2006) was one very fruitful response to the transnational challenge. Studies of borderlands and zones of encounter, migrations and diasporas, travel and transculturation, routes and flows, and hybridities have abounded in recent years. Because these phenomena are themselves so integral to globalization, the transnational can be particularly well-suited (though not exclusive) to contemporary cultural studies. Such studies employ new ways of thinking that are made possible by our contemporary experience of the

globalization of labor and capital, the lightning speed of communications, rapid global exchanges of cultural forms and media, a professional world in which our status is sometimes measured by the size of our frequent-flyer mileage balances, and our constant employment (both professional and personal) of the powerful new capacities of the world-wide Web. One marker of the present strength of transnational work is that the next jeremiad has already begun to take shape, in criticisms that the [American] American Studies Association's "international" initiative is "paradoxically conservative" in its reification of national boundaries, and its construction of a "we" of US-based American studies scholars versus a "them" of "foreign"-based scholars—a framework that inadvertently replicates the structures of US imperialism.⁷

But I would like to address a different risk incurred by an exclusive attention to the transnational: the risk of losing track of place, of what I called, in my American Studies Association presidential address in Washington, DC, the *groundwork* of American studies. Globalization does tend to promote the destruction, homogenization, and Disneyfication of place, not just in the US but all over the world. Scholars across the humanities and social sciences have responded to this threat to place with a renewed interest in the insights of geography: both the humanistic geography developed in the 1970s by such figures as Edward Relph and Yi-fu Tuan, who stressed the power of topophilia, the affective bonds tying people to place; and the new critical cultural geography that emerged in the 1980s and '90s, shaped by such scholars as Doreen Massey and David Harvey, who focus on the power geometries at work in the social construction of space and place. In our eagerness to reject the nation-state as the self-evident spatial container for our studies, we should not abandon the concept of place itself.⁸

The power of place does in fact inform some of the best examples of the new transnational scholarship, especially in those borderland studies which, while challenging the treatment of territories as isomorphic cultural containers, reconceptualize them as sites of multiple encounters and exchanges that generate new cultural hybridities. But despite the considerable elasticity of our present usages of "borderlands" (a term often enlisted more metaphorically than geographically), not all our subjects can or should be defined primarily as creatures of the borderlands; and we need to guard against a tendency to project our own globalizing sensibilities into the past, onto people whose experience was dramatically different from our own, and whose cultural orientation was more

significantly local or regional than national, much less transnational. Postnationalism, in other words, invites new studies that are organized not only in the spaces and places of the transnational, but also in the geographies of the subnational: regions, local communities, neighborhoods, dwellings, and landscapes—not the “national landscape” that figured so prominently in the myth-and-symbol school, but landscapes more true to the original Dutch concept of *landskip*, meaning a view that can be taken in by a sweep of the eyes from a single fixed point. As historians of American cultures, we need to recognize that the relationship between location and identity has not always been as unstable as it has become under late capitalism. Sometimes, what anthropologist Liisa Malkki has called “the metaphysics of sedentarism”—the tendency to identify a people and their culture with a mappable place⁹—is not imposed by “sedentary” scholars, but embraced by our historical subjects. When the people we study understand their cultural identities in local territorial terms, our task must be not merely to unmask their fictions of place, but to try to understand and explain them.

One of the realizations that emerge from a close attention to the local and the regional is how much, in our enthusiastic rush to unmask the fictions of the nation-state, we have exaggerated both its unity and its hegemony. Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities*¹⁰ has generated a large body of scholarship that tends to treat bourgeois nationalism as the interpretive ace of trump. Two of them have been particularly helpful to my efforts to think my way out of the nation-state box. Angela Miller’s *Empire of the Eye: Landscape Representation and American Cultural Politics, 1825–1875* opens with a strong assertion of the problematic nature of the “national landscape,” and proposes to supplement Benedict Anderson by adding visual images to print media as critical factors in the creation of American nationalism. Miller identifies a host of problems with the concept of “national landscape”: the “politicization of the landscape under the pressures of sectionalism,” the “instrumentalization of nature as the raw material of American empire,” the usage of landscape painting to figure social conflicts and to “deflect the forces of localism” that threatened the expanding national market economy, and the environmental contests being waged over land in the context of economic growth and territorial appropriation. Most important, she points out that “normative definitions of nationalism” in the antebellum period had a pronounced northeastern slant expressive of that region’s claim to a special role in the nation’s origins. Miller coins the term “synecdochic

nationalism” to convey northeasterners’ efforts to make their regional part come to stand for the nationalist whole. “The form [of landscape paintings] was local,” she acknowledges, “but the program was national.”¹¹ Thus, despite her commitment to critiquing the notion of a “national landscape,” she ends up arguing that seemingly local forms—such as paintings of the topographically distinctive Oxbow at Northampton, Massachusetts, or West Rock in New Haven, Connecticut—served as thin disguises for nationalist projects. Nationalism, however problematic, is still the *primum mobile* of her study.

To take another example: David Noble’s *Death of a Nation: American Culture and the End of Exceptionalism* argues that “nationalist American studies scholars from the 1930s to the 1960s . . . were not self-conscious of their definitions of geographic and cultural space [i.e. the boundaries of the nation-state] because they believed that their culture was created by nature.” They accepted the myth of Nature’s Nation because they inherited an intellectual tradition stretching back through Charles and Mary Beard and Frederick Jackson Turner to George Bancroft, who had “defined the United States as a unique state of nature whose cultural virginity needed to be kept isolated from the rest of the world, which because it was not in harmony with nature, dwelled in darkness.” So Noble, like Miller, traces the origins of American nationalism and exceptionalism to antebellum New England. Following Miller’s lead, Noble argues that the “painters of national landscapes” (he asserts, rather than argues, their nationalism) “suggested that there was not a variety of landscapes within a nation’s political boundaries,” and deliberately “minimized the significance of the variety of local cultures within those boundaries.” But after heavily criticizing this oppressively nationalist lineage, he concedes “how difficult it has been for historians, literary critics, painters, musicians, and architects to imagine an alternative” to the metanarrative of Nature’s Nation. David Noble’s implied response to Prasenjit Duara is that rescuing history from the nation may not be possible; we may “never,” he writes, “see another metanarrative that hopes to enclose all human experience within a single framework” as the mythic narrative of Nature’s Nation has done.¹² In Noble’s study, as in Miller’s, nationalism is still the ace of trump.

But Noble’s strong reaction against the “naturalization” of the nation-state has inadvertently contributed to the illusion of its hegemony, by elevating George Bancroft (and his intellectual descendants) over all other historians of his era. In fact, Bancroft—author of the ten-volume

History of the United States of America from the Discovery of the Continent to the Present (published between 1834 and 1885)—was by no means the only historian at work in nineteenth-century New England. It is professional historians who canonized him, initially by making him president of the fledgling American Historical Association in 1887, and subsequently by treating him as the single most important pre-professional practitioner of our craft. And we canonized him precisely because he took a mystically eternal American Nation as his subject—evident in his grandiose and anachronistic title, history of *the United States* since the *discovery*—and traced its providentially guided progress towards greatness. *E pluribus unum* served as his central theme: the story of how the initially fragmented, thirteen British-mainland colonies marched through time towards Revolutionary unity. And *e pluribus unum* characterized his historical methodology: he told this story by picking up fragments of historical evidence and shaping them into a unified narrative under the command of a single, authoritative voice.¹³

In canonizing George Bancroft, professional historians have permitted his long shadow to obscure a deeper, more grass-roots practice of history in New England, which privileged not the national, but the local and the regional. Historians don't actually have to "imagine" an alternative to the nationalist metanarrative, as Noble suggests; all we have to do is recognize it when we see it, in a richly eclectic set of nineteenth-century historical practices that we have pejoratively labeled, and largely dismissed, as "antiquarianism." In an essay titled "The Significance of History," in 1891, Frederick Jackson Turner captured his generation of newly professionalized historians' criticism of the older tradition of antiquarianism by explaining that "The antiquarian strives to bring back the past for the sake of the past; the historian strives to show the present to itself by revealing its origin from the past. The goal of the antiquarian is the dead past; the goal of the historian is the living present."¹⁴ And generations of historians ever since have proved reluctant to treat seriously the work of earlier antiquarians, as though they feared that even to read such work might taint their own scholarship with a lack of professionalism. This is how most of us have overlooked literally hundreds of historians who, though they failed to achieve the national reputation of their contemporary, George Bancroft, drew significant local and regional attention, especially in Bancroft's own region of New England.

After 1790, New Englanders were engaged in an extensive antiquarian project that focused not on the national, but on the local and regional

past; that was devoted not solely to the relatively recent experience of nationhood, but to what they called “antiquity”; and that examined not just documentary evidence, but also material culture and oral traditions, archaeological sites and “ruins” of the human-built environment, genealogy and paleography, and even the findings of geology, paleontology, and early environmental study. New England antiquarianism was shaped most fundamentally by the English tradition of chorography (literally, place-writing) dating back to the Elizabethan historian William Camden.¹⁵ A central task of historical studies, explained Prof. William Gammell of Brown University in 1844, was “clothing each familiar spot, each ruin, and hill-top, and river, with the associations of history.”¹⁶ As the charters to New England’s six state historical associations (founded between 1791 and 1838) reveal, within the chorographic tradition, natural history and topography were considered an intrinsic part of “civic” history; and members were encouraged to contribute mineral samples to the “cabinets,” as well as books and manuscripts to the libraries, of the early societies.¹⁷ Chorography treated history as inextricable from place, and a crucial instrument for transforming space into place by ascribing to it meaning and the power of memory. Local historians in nineteenth-century New England kept busy endowing various features of their landscapes—boulders and trees, mountains and waterfalls—with Professor Gammell’s “associations of history.”

But chorography was a matter not just of surveying the surface of the landscape for sites of memory; it enlisted both archaeology and the earth sciences to explore antiquity in three dimensions. As Lucy Lippard wrote, “A layered location replete with human histories and memories, place has width as well as depth.”¹⁸ New England antiquarians did not conceptualize history as a horizontal time-line on the model of Bancroft’s teleological vision of the American nation-state moving providentially across time from the nation’s “discovery” to its inevitable fulfillment in the American Revolution. Instead, New England antiquarians understood history as a vertically layered process, filled with breaks and gaps, but nevertheless readable in the strata of both the human-built environment and the workings of earth history. Theirs was an intensive effort to uncover the history of place—local place—both on and beneath the surface of the landscape in what geologists were coming to call “deep time”—a past that was far older than the early modern Christian calculation that a mere 6000 years had passed since the Creation. In an effort to capture the layered quality of this form of history, I have found it useful

to understand the antiquarian project stratigraphically on the model of a geological core sample. The top layer of New England's past was the "ancient" colonial period, which local historians explored in hundreds of town histories, state "historical collections," genealogies, and gazetteers; town centennial and bicentennial celebrations; gravestones and monuments; "ruins" such as cellar holes, well dents, and old stone walls; folk tales and legends and interviews with "ancient inhabitants"; archaeological finds of artifacts and caches of coins and possessions buried by settlers during Indian wars; abandoned corn-hills and old fruit orchards, and more. Local historians tirelessly identified such landscape features as "Charter Oak" and "Meeting-house Rock" as sites of memory—most typically, places where the "founders" (not of the nation, but of the town) had first stepped, or found shelter, or gathered into a polity, or worshipped. Plymouth Rock—originally known as "Forefathers' Rock"—is merely one local landscape feature that was successfully appropriated for the nation's story, at that memorable bicentennial celebration where the young Daniel Webster worked a July Fourth crowd for several hours of dazzling nationalist oratory to convey his vision of Plymouth Rock as the "threshold" not just of the modest backwater of Plymouth, but of the nation.¹⁹ Antiquarians sought out the landscape features denoting the "ancient metes and bounds" of their communities, and walked the land with early land-deeds in hand, demarcating one settler's land from another's, and noting where rivers had changed their course, and marshlands had receded, since the deeds had first been drawn. They located and sketched "ancient" houses and churches. A few of them resorted to archaeology: two clergymen walked, partially excavated, and mapped the "Ancient Settlement of Sheepscot" in the state of Maine, that had been wiped out in a late seventeenth-century Indian raid.²⁰

Below the colonial stratum of the antiquarian core sample lay Indian history, both colonial and pre-contact. Indian history did represent a conundrum to Anglo-American antiquarians, who were inclined by their Enlightenment cultural chauvinism combined with racism to believe that Native Americans, who largely lacked a written language, were thus people without history.²¹ But they enthusiastically embraced the task of writing about the colonial encounter of Europeans and Indians, and, like the professional anthropologists who followed, decades later, in their footsteps, they enlisted the ethnographic present to speculate about native life before what they called the "discovery." They collected Indian arrowheads and other "relics," exhumed Indian burials, mapped virtually

every action in King Philip's War on the landscape, and restored or invented Indian place-names for natural features such as mountains and brooks. They erected memorials to those sachems who had allied with the English against other native groups in colonial Indian war, and mounted a virtual cult of King Philip or "Metacom."²² They made some effort to gather Algonquian folklore from the remnants of New England's native peoples, and what they couldn't gather, they invented; poets such as John Greenleaf Whittier and Lydia Sigourney wove scraps of Indian legends into romanticized tales, often explicitly located on particular features of the regional landscape.²³

Antiquarianism cut deeper still into the past to uncover the layer of the "Ancient Visitors"—stories of pre-Columbian travelers to New England, who were believed to include ancient Phoenicians, the Lost Tribes of Israel, Vikings, Siberian Tartars, wandering Mayans, exiled Trojans, pirates, "Hindoos," and Japanese explorers—depending on which antiquarian you listened to (although some happily embraced two or more of these theories simultaneously). A single site in southeastern Massachusetts focused much of the endless debate over which of these groups had preceded the English to the region: Dighton Rock, a seven-ton sandstone boulder (located about 26 miles from Plymouth Rock) that was scrawled all over its wide, flat face with curious hieroglyphic inscriptions, lending it the appearance of a "graffiti-covered side of a New York subway train."²⁴ Inscriptions such as these actually mandated some theory of ancient European or Asian visitors, based on the conviction that Native Americans were illiterate. Similarly inscribed rocks all over New England were scrutinized as evidence of ancient visitors, as were Indian legends of ancient newcomers to their land. And in 1831, a Fall River housewife digging for sand to scour her house uncovered what quickly became known as the "Fall River Skeleton"—decorated with brass tubing and encased in a shroud of tree bark—which was variously claimed to be a great Indian sachem, a Viking warrior, a lost Phoenician mariner, and "one of the Asiatic race, who transiently settled in Central North America, and afterward went to Mexico and founded those cities." This exhumation prompted Longfellow—who regularly passed through Fall River on his way to vacation at the Rhode Island shore—to write his "Skeleton in Armor," which linked the skeleton to both nearby Dighton Rock and an old stone tower in Newport, Rhode Island, and spun from these threads a tale of Viking romance.²⁵

Indians and ancient visitors pretty much exhausted even the most

imaginative antiquarians' quest for ancient human inhabitants of New England. But the newly popular sciences of geology and paleontology presented possibilities for even deeper explorations into the abyss of time. Geology extended the promise of tracing New England's past-in-place all the way down to the Creation; and its practitioners often likened themselves to antiquarians, reading the stony "leaves" of the book of nature, and scrutinizing ancient "medallions" or fossils left by the "pre-adamic inhabitants" of the region.²⁶ Mastodon skeletons, "Ornithichnite" or dinosaur footprints, and fossilized trilobites—all collected by historical societies all over New England—definitively demonstrated the principle of species extinction, suggesting that New England's ancient non-human inhabitants had been even more diverse and exotic than its ancient human visitors. Geological tourism grew popular, as academic geologists wrote accessible guides of the region's most prominent geological features, such as Professor Edward Hitchcock's "Scenographical Geology of Massachusetts"; and Louis Agassiz's glacial theory of the New England landscape, popularized in the 1840s, sent New Englanders on trips to see the glacier-scoured peaks of the White Mountains, and the "boulder trains" of the Berkshires.²⁷ The nineteenth-century popularity of the Franconia Notch profile known as "The Old Man of the Mountain" rested in part on the romantic fantasy that the Old Man had stood as the sole witness, across millions of years, of the region's geomorphology.²⁸

Even this brief sketch of New England antiquarianism illuminates its dramatic differences from the nationalist history of George Bancroft. Bancroft's subject was the nation-state's teleological movement towards its providential realization in the American Revolution; the antiquarians' central subject was local and regional place, the ground beneath their feet. Bancroft created a smooth, nearly unbroken narrative of the nation's organic, progressive growth, *e pluribus unum*, since 1492; the antiquarians produced a jerkily episodic history of "antiquity," filled with ruptures, silences, and unexpected leaps. Bancroft told the triumphantly exceptionalist story of Anglo-Saxons walking a progressive time line into modernity while pursuing their Manifest Destiny by displacing the savages to open up new spaces for freedom and civilization to the West; the antiquarians told numerous tales of successive occupations of the land by multiple peoples, races, and even nonhuman species, each of which—including the present Anglo-Saxons—was fated to undergo the same cyclical process of first rising, then declining, and finally becoming extinct, leaving behind only ruins and traces and "memorials"—colonial

cellars, Indian and Viking bones, dinosaur tracks. And these antiquarian stories most purposefully did not follow the movements of any people, including the Anglo-Saxons, off the New England landscape into the West (though they did occasionally follow the migrants until that point when they disappeared over the western horizon). Theirs was a determinedly, conscientiously “sedentary” treatment of the past-in-place.

New Englanders were profoundly threatened by the American West, and by the Jacksonian Democrats (including that renegade New Englander, George Bancroft) who were aggressively promoting its exploration, conquest, and development. In a sense, the exploration of antiquity was New England’s internal version of what has been called the “Second Age of Discovery,”²⁹ particularly with reference to the exploration of the trans-Mississippi West. The nation’s expansion was draining New England’s political power, cultural authority, and its youth to the west; and pushing those who stayed behind into increasingly capitalistic enterprises—both industrial production and market-oriented agriculture—that were transforming the landscape beyond recognition.³⁰ As the nation’s center of gravity shifted horizontally to the west, a wide range of cultural workers in New England directed their mental energy vertically into the ground beneath their feet, trying to anchor themselves, their young people, and yes, their nation, in place. New England chorographers—local historians, ethnographers, poets, geologists, landscape painters—devised their own peculiar version of Romantic travel: antiquarian time-travel. They managed to explore new territory and discover exotic curiosities and wonders, all the while heeding Henry David Thoreau’s dictum that “If a man is rich and strong anywhere, it must be on his native soil.”³¹

Was the antiquarians’ version of New England’s past in any sense a *nationalist* story? At times, yes, though “micro-nationalist” better captures their tendency to tell the story of a town’s founding as though it were a microcosm of the nation’s. And Benedict Anderson might recognize in the antiquarian project the nationalist quest for an ancient past suitable for a great nation. But it was also *transnational*, especially in its accounts of “ancient visitors” from Europe, the Middle East, and Asia who preceded the first English settlers of New England. Above all, it was subnational, with its focus on local and regional histories, genealogies, place-names, topographic features, and geomorphology. The central task of New England chorographers was to transform space into place by planting memories on and in the land, to reassert the power of the local

and the regional against the national during an era of aggressive nation-formation, the dramatic expansion of the national market economy, major outmigration from the Northeast, and a Democratic regime that was often at odds with New England interests. As Arjun Appadurai has observed, “the attachments of local subjects to local life” can provide a point of resistance to the nation-state. “National space can come to be differently valorized for the state [which values territory] and for its citizen-subjects [who value what he calls “soil”].” He explains the distinction: “While soil is a matter of a spatialized and originary discourse of belonging, territory is concerned with integrity, surveyability, policing, and subsistence.”³²

Whether or not the antiquarians’ histories of Indians, Vikings, and dinosaurs should be identified as “an originary discourse of belonging,” the strong allure of local soil or ground in their work is ungainsayable. In our tendency to focus on the histories offered by such men as George Bancroft and Daniel Webster, we risk overlooking hundreds of other New Englanders who offered an alternative to their nationalist imaginings. New England antiquarians embraced a more hybrid and eclectic history than the single-stranded story of the Pilgrim Fathers. Their history of New England was not limited to white colonists, but included Native Americans, a fluid range of pre-Columbian visitors from Europe, the Middle East, and Asia, and even extinct non-human “inhabitants” of the land. Their stories of the invasion of New England did not offer a triumphal account of an Anglo-Saxon conquest leading ineluctably to the birth of a great and immortal nation, but a long and complex tale of successive populations across the centuries, all of which—including the present Euro-Americans—would eventually give way to their successors. Their historical research did not stop with documentary evidence, but employed oral history, legend and folklore, material culture, archaeology, and even paleontology. And their tales of the past did not assume that the nation-state was the most important unit for study, but focused on towns, topographic features, and environmental regions such as the White Mountains and the Rhode Island coast.

In short, early nineteenth-century New England antiquarians engaged in many historic practices that were contemptuously cast aside during the professionalization of history in the late nineteenth century, but have been revived in recent decades. To take just one example: antiquarians could be scornfully dismissive of any historian who failed to walk the land of a town under study; modern environmental historians now rou-

tinely open their studies with accounts of their own walks on the land. Though it is not my primary intention to celebrate either the methodological prescience or the scholarly achievements of these antiquarians, I do take them more seriously as historians than previous scholars have done. Though in many ways a defensively conservative action, New England antiquarianism did not promote an exclusively reactionary, parochial sense of place, but constructed what cultural geographer Doreen Massey has called “a global sense of place” that was hybrid, fluid, and contested.³³

NOTES

This paper was given at the Annual Meeting of the Japanese Association for American Studies, Nanzan University, 10 June 2006.

¹ George Lipsitz, *American Studies in a Moment of Danger* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001).

² Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991); Janice Radway, “What’s in a Name?” in Donald E. Pease and Robyn Wiegman, eds., *The Futures of American Studies* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2002), 53.

³ Lipsitz, *American Studies in a Moment of Danger*, xvi.

⁴ Radway, “What’s in a Name?” 51, 65.

⁵ Prasenjit Duara, *Rescuing History from the Nation: Questioning Narratives of Modern China* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995).

⁶ E. J. Hobsbawm, “Ethnicity and Nationalism in Europe Today,” *Anthropology Today* 8 (Feb. 1992): 3.

⁷ See Sheila Hones and Julia Leyda, “Geographies of American Studies,” *American Quarterly* 57 (Dec. 2005): 1019–1032.

⁸ Karen Halttunen, “Groundwork: American Studies in Place—Presidential Address to the American Studies Association, November 4, 2005,” *American Quarterly* 58 (March 2006): 1–15.

⁹ Liisa Malkki, “National Geographic,” in *Culture, Power, Place*, eds. A. Gubta and J. Ferguson (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press), 42–62.

¹⁰ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

¹¹ Angela Miller, *The Empire of the Eye: Landscape Representation and American Cultural Politics, 1825–1875* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), 6, 14, 3, 17.

¹² David W. Noble, *Death of a Nation: American Culture and the End of Exceptionalism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), xxiv, xxvii, xlii, xlvi.

¹³ See Richard C. Vitzthum, *The American Compromise: Theme and Method in the Histories of Bancroft, Parkman, and Adams* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1974), chap. 1.

¹⁴ Frederick Jackson Turner, “The Significance of History,” quoted in Ellen Fitzpatrick, *History’s Memory: Writing America’s Past, 1880–1980* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 49.

¹⁵ On the English tradition of chorography, see Leslie Cormack, *Charting an Empire: Geography at the English Universities, 1580–1620* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), chap. 5.

¹⁶ William Gammell, "Address delivered before the Rhode Island Historical Society, at the opening of their cabinet, on Wednesday, November 20, 1844" (Providence: B. Cranston and Co., 1844), 9.

¹⁷ For example, the Maine Historical Society proclaimed its duty to collect and preserve everything related to the "civil, ecclesiastical, and natural history" of the state; see *Collections of the Maine Historical Society*, I (Portland: Day, Fraser & Co., 1831), i. The cabinet of the Massachusetts Historical Society contained "an Ermine from New Hampshire," "Two natural Garnets, found in the district of Maine," and "Specimens of Petrifications found at Brookline" among its many curiosities; see *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, I (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1835), 68, 76, 82.

¹⁸ Lucy R. Lippard, *The Lure of the Local: Senses of Place in a Multicentered Society* (New York: New Press, 1997), 7.

¹⁹ See John Seelye, *Memory's Nation: The Place of Plymouth Rock* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998), esp. chap. 4.

²⁰ On the Sheepscot site, see David Cushman, "Sheepscot," *Collections of the Maine Historical Society* IV (Portland, 1855):209–233; and Rev. Samuel Johnson, "Account of an Ancient Settlement on Sheepscot River," *Collections of the Maine Historical Society*, vol. II (Portland, 1847):229–232. The *Collections* and *Proceedings* volumes of the six state historical associations for New England are filled with the materials summarized in this and the following paragraphs.

²¹ On the perceived "problem" of Native American history, see Steven Conn, *History's Shadow: Native Americans and Historical Consciousness in the Nineteenth Century* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2004), esp. chap. 1.

²² Jill Lepore, *The Name of War: King Philip's War and the Origins of American Identity* (New York: Vintage, 1999); Constance A. Crosby, "From Myth to History, or Why King Philip's Ghost Walks Abroad," in Mark P. Leone and Parker B. Potter, Jr., eds., *The Recovery of Meaning in Historical Archaeology* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1988), 183–209.

²³ See e.g. John Greenleaf Whittier, "Metacom," in *Legends of New England* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1992), 37–45; Lydia Sigourney, "The Mohegan Church," in *Select Poems by Mrs. L. H. Sigourney* (Philadelphia: John E. Potter and Co., 1841), 323–25.

²⁴ Stephen Williams, *Fantastic Archaeology: The Wild Side of North American Prehistory* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991), 213. For an overview of theories concerning Dighton Rock, see Edmund Burke Delabarre, *Dighton Rock: A Study of the Written Rocks of New England* (New York: Walter Neale, 1928).

²⁵ John Stark, Esq. in *American Monthly Magazine* III (Boston, 1837), reprinted in John W. Barber, *Historical Collections . . . Relating to the History and Antiquities of Every Town in Massachusetts* (Worcester: Dorr, Howland & Co., 1839), 123–125; Rev. Orin Fowler, *History of Fall River, with Notices of Freetown and Tiverton* (Fall River: Almy Milne, 1862; originally published in 1841), 11; Charles Christian Rafn, *Supplement to the Antiquitates Americanae* (Copenhagen: Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries, 1841), 3, 6, 15, 19, 27; Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, *Letters and Journal*, 1840.

²⁶ See Edward Hitchcock, *Reminiscences of Amherst College: Historical, Scientific, Biographical and Autobiographical* (Northampton, Massachusetts: Bridgman Childs, 1863); Hitchcock, "An Account of the Ornithichnites or Foot Marks of Birds, on the New Red Sandstone of the Valley of the Connecticut," *American Journal of Science and Arts*, vol. 29 (1836); Hitchcock, *Ichnology of New England: A Report on the Sandstone of the Connecticut Valley* (Boston: William White, 1858).

²⁷ See Edward Hitchcock, *Sketch of the Scenery of Massachusetts* (Northampton: J. H. Butler, 1842). On New England tourism, see Dona Brown, *Inventing New England: Regional Tourism in the Nineteenth Century* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995).

²⁸ See Karen Halttunen, "That Great Natural Curiosity: The Old Man of the Mountain as *Lusus Naturae*," *Common-place* 4 (January 2004) at <http://www.common-place.org/vol-04/no-02/halttunen/>.

²⁹ See William Goetzmann, *New Lands, New Men: The United States and the Second Great Age of Discovery* (New York: Viking, 1986).

³⁰ See Joseph A. Conforti, *Imagining New England: Explorations of Regional Identity from the Pilgrims to the Mid-Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001).

³¹ Bradford Torrey and Francis H. Allen, eds., *The Journal of Henry David Thoreau*, 14 vols., introduction by Walter Harding (Salt Lake City: Gibbs M. Smith, Inc., 1984): vol. 10, 20 November 1857, 191.

³² Arjun Appadurai, "Sovereignty without Territoriality: Notes for a Postnational Geography," in *The Anthropology of Space and Place: Locating Culture*, ed. Setha M. Low and Denise Lawrence-Zuniga (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2003), 338, 340.

³³ Doreen Massey, "A Global Sense of Place," in *Reading Human Geography*, ed. T. Barnes and D. Gregory (London: Arnold, 1997), 315–23.