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Editor's Introduction

Mobility has been regarded as one of the major elements in American life. Archetypal cases readily come to mind, such as geographic mobility of white settlers across the continent from east to west, and upward social mobility in cities of lower-class people, often immigrants from abroad. In either formulation, mobility is life-changing: it is associated with the moving person's commitment to achieve an improved socioeconomic standing, which in turn opens doors to broader recognition and even renown if the person successfully makes the move all the way. Considered this way, mobility evokes an optimistic, forward-looking approach to life and reinforces the popular creed about what is possible for one in one's own life. This positive understanding of mobility renders immobility hardly inspiring—it suggests shortage or lack of opportunity, resources, and worst of all, initiative.

Readers of this journal must have sensed by now that the previous paragraph describes mobility in American life along "nationalist" lines—mobility which supposedly encourages individualist actions and yet serves to unify the American people by holding out the promise of the fruits of successful moving. The organizing idea of Number Thirty-Three of the *Japanese Journal of American Studies*, however, is that besides the traditional approach there are many other scholarly treatments in which attention to mobility is helpful. This issue accordingly features six contributions which address a variety of questions bearing on mobility expansively. Some offer critical appraisals of the concept of mobility by probing different implications associated with it. Some others apply the term to phenomena other than shifts in the geographic location or socioeconomic standing of people, thereby introducing new angles to offer insights in the shifting dynamics of American society and culture. Still others employ transnational approaches, as mobility can be practiced across national boundaries.

The special feature opens with literary studies. Takahiro Sakane zeroes in on Henry James's sense of revolt against the relentless, or mobile, change in the urban landscape, architecture and demography in America at the turn of the twentieth century. In *The American Scene*, James evokes an alternative vision to extol the past representing an immobile, enduring value worth commemorating, even as his prose shows signs of irrepressible fluidity in his perception. In the second contribution which focuses on African Americans in Harlem in the early twentieth century, Yuri Sakuma shows that there were three aesthetic positions in the writings produced during the Harlem Renaissance on the themes of migration, blues and jazz: racial uplift, appreciation of primal vitality of the southern and working-class origins, and the objectification of females and feminist resistance to it. The third contribution, by Manako Ogawa, discusses an episode in the history of the transplantation in Hawai‘i of Kotohira Shrine, the guarding deity of highly mobile Japanese fisherfolk, in the late 1940s. The US government confiscated the shrine in 1948 as enemy assets, only to lose in the court case filed against it by the members of the shrine. It assumed that all shrines contributed to State Shinto and therefore the emperor worship of the 1930s and 1940s but failed to produce evidence in its favor, and the decision vindicated the shrine's roots in the migratory fishing community.

A perspective from those who encouraged mobility is provided in the fourth contribution. Focusing on boosters who were intent on securing major federal matching grants for a planned rapid transit system from Atlanta to its suburbs in the 1950s and early 1960s, Ichiro Miyata shows which obstacles to facilitation of mobility the boosters took pains to overcome and which ones they failed to face squarely, particularly the then-in-process white flight. In the fifth contribution, Yuka Mizutani explicates how the Arizona-Sonora area is distinct from adjacent borderlands. The Arizona-Sonora borderland is very much centered in the harsh environment of the Sonoran Desert, and its edible plants deeply inform the food culture of the area. Diverse population groups, from Indigenous peoples to latecomers who moved in the area from late nineteenth century on, have added new layers to the distinctive regional gastronomy which is clearly marked off from commercialized Tex-Mex food. In the sixth contribution, Masahito Watanabe discusses how the caucus system adopted in the state of Iowa for the selection of presidential candidates encourages broad participation in the electoral campaign process. Despite the criticisms triggered in 2020 by the delay in reporting the results of the caucuses, Watanabe argues that Iowa's system has its virtues and has worked

reasonably well. The rules of Iowa caucuses allow formation of alliances among groups of supporters of presidential aspirants or of particular issues. Such alliances have been successful in foregrounding seemingly uninviting political questions as rousing campaign issues, and have helped revitalize presidential campaigns in the present century.

This issue also publishes two articles on Herman Melville. Yoshiaki Furui compares and connects *Typee*, Melville's first major novel, with better-known *Moby Dick* by focusing on treatments of alterity. Despite all the great differences between the two works, both share an attention to seeing through the unfathomable other. Captain Ahab is insistent on sizing up the white whale and is forthright in confronting it; Tommo is titillated by the culture of the Typees, though he is fearful and stops short of immersing himself in it. In the last article of this volume Shogo Tanokuchi delves among Melville's short, comical essays and identifies a complicated fluctuation of perspective on Chinese and Japanese civilizations in the shadow of US expansion across the continent and the Pacific. Rather than putting the narrators in the privileged position of the observer of Asian cultures as in his more famous longer works, Melville's short essays resonate with P. T. Barnum's then-popular freaky exhibitions in their occasional inversion of the observer and the observed.

We thank Katy Meigs for her careful attention to the articles as copyeditor and Maki Tsunoda for her administrative support. David Potter has our gratitude for his timely assistance to the editorial board. We also thank the American Studies Foundation for its generous financial support which has made possible the publication of this volume. The articles published in the *Japanese Journal of American Studies*, including those from back issues, are freely available online (http://www.jaas.gr.jp). We invite responses and criticisms from our readers and hope that the journal will continue to be an important player in the field of American Studies.

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Editor