

## Foreword

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This book is the product of a very personal experience of American mobility: a transnational academic career that has traversed three continents over the course of the past twenty years. Embarking on my doctoral study in 1995, I could hardly have imagined the trajectory that would carry me from Seattle to Germany to Japan and then, in 2015, back to Germany again. The timeliness of the “transnational turn” in American Studies also strikes me as exceedingly well-timed for my own career, coming as it did just as I was beginning to make my place within the transnational networks of Americanists in Europe and Asia while maintaining ties to the United States.

Had I remained in the U.S., it is entirely likely that I never would have published my dissertation in book form, but rather moved on to another research project in order to acquire tenure in the U.S. academic system. Indeed, in the national academic context where I found myself—Japan—the publication of a monograph was not in fact even a requirement for tenure; peer-reviewed journal articles and international conference presentations were esteemed more highly than a (frequently self-published) monograph and thus I adapted to my situation and built my CV accordingly. However, upon relocating to Germany, I discovered that the conventions dictate that, for a professorship, an academic must have her dissertation between two book covers sanctioned by a publishing house. This requirement at first caused me some small degree of chagrin, given the intervening years since my doctoral defense, in which I had ranged far and wide into some new territory both literally—in my countries of residence—and metaphorically, in my research and teaching.

It felt, somehow, dishonest to publish in 2015 a dissertation that had been written in the previous century (!). But then I hit upon the notion of

publishing, in place of four of the original dissertation chapters, the four peer-reviewed journal articles that grew up out of them, along with the remaining two unpublished chapters, constituting a kind of greatest hits of my early career that ranges from text written as a doctoral student to the reworked and often hardly recognizable revisions produced under the rigors of an early career academic, and under the guidance of anonymous reviewers and generous colleagues. What follows here is then a published record of my doctoral research, completed at the University of Washington between 1995 and 1998, and then substantially revised over the subsequent years. I have retained the original Dedication, Acknowledgments, and Introduction, only amending when necessary to clarify the provenance of particular chapters. The full text of the original dissertation is available online in the usual repositories for the unnaturally curious, but this more convenient and (I hope) more compelling version will be the final text of a (for me) fascinating first book-length undertaking.