OUKA
The University of Osaka
Institutional Knowledge Archive

Title	House of History : Academic History and History in Society
Author(s)	Fujikawa, Takao
Citation	パブリック・ヒストリー. 2014, 11, p. 106-116
Version Type	VoR
URL	https://doi.org/10.18910/66530
rights	
Note	

The University of Osaka Institutional Knowledge Archive : OUKA

https://ir.library.osaka-u.ac.jp/

The University of Osaka

Journal of History for the Public, **11** (2014), pp. 106-116 ©2014 Department of Occidental History, Osaka University. ISSN 1348-852x

House of History
Academic History and History in Society

Takao Fujikawa

Though it seems to be a bit outdated, I must confess, that I still sometimes refer to E.H. Carr's *What is History* as a useful or usable introduction to history lecture courses. Today, I want to do the same as an introduction to today's seminar.

Carr refutes the commonsense view of history that there exists the irrefutable hard core of history, basic facts which are the same for all historians, independently of the surrounding pulp of disputable interpretation. He argues instead that "the historian is engaged on a continuous process of moulding his facts to his interpretation and his interpretation to his facts". History means for Carr "a continuous process of interaction between the historian and his facts, an unending dialogue between the present and the past".(1) The answer still rings true for me as my personal experience as a historian. The problem for me is that the historian he mentions is apparently an academic historian and the history is a narrowly defined academic field. In the world where the subaltern can speak and in which history is increasingly privatized and commercialized, the confinement of the definition of history and historians to a limited circle of professional historians appears to be insufficient.

Is Hayden White, a famous philosopher of history, who was once my favorite scholar in my lectures, helpful in this respect? Although his direct influence on actual historical practice seems to me virtually insignificant, he is often depicted as representing the linguistic turn in historical theory. Whatever position he may occupy in relation to history, he at least has opened up new opportunities for historians to think over their methodologies and relationships with other disciplines. However, his figurative description of history as literature does not penetrate beyond the boundary of academic history. Despite his provocative assertion that historical narratives are most manifestly verbal fictions and that the contents of history are more akin to those of literature than of science, his intended readers are likewise evidently professional historians.(2) His theory and explanation of the practice of history is entrapped in the world of academic history. In the environment where history's presence is becoming widely felt in society, while academic history is languishing, we need to rethink history' s role in the twenty-

(1) E.H.Carr, *What is History?*, Penguin, 2nd ed., 1987, pp.9-12, pp.29-30.

(2) See Haydon White, *Metahistory: the Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1973, p.20; *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism*, Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979, p.52.

first century world.

Fortunately now I have acquired new pet historians to introduce my lectures. But, before I proceed to my favorites, I want to review several works on the relationship between academic history and history in society. Graeme Davison, a renowned Australian historian, is perplexed to find that family history, heritage, local history and other kinds of popular history are booming in the rest of the community while academic and school histories are slumping. He argues that ours "is a society with a strong sense of the past, but with only a weak sense of history." (3) History has obtained an enhanced status in society, while history in university education is in decline. This view seems to me prevalent among people who think about history's role in the contemporary society.

Ludmilla Jordanova, Professor of Modern History at King's College London, in her *History in Practice*, argues that academic history cannot be seen as isolated from the world and advocates that history should be more engaged with public concerns. She observes that the study of history should be more intimately connected with museums, the educational system and government as well as with television, fiction, drama, poetry, radio, film, art, and so on. She asserts that the past is everywhere in virtually all societies. However, over recent years has this feature become exceptionally prominent in many western countries including Australia with which this seminar is particularly concerned.(4)

By quoting Keith Jenkins, a polemical theorist of history, Jerome de Groot poses questions: if we recognize that 'history' and 'the past' are empty signifiers, who tells the public what 'history' and 'the past' are and what kind of semiotic processes and strategies are involved to create their meaning and representation? If, as he maintains, history is an empty signifier, the lines drawn between academic historians and other practitioners of history are at least considerably blurred. After the so called history wars and cultural wars were fought in countries like Australia, USA and Japan, it becomes evident that who tells the public what history is has become a crucial question to anyone seriously engaging in history. When we try to understand the role of history in the present world, we therefore need to understand both academic history and history in society, both the study of the past and the past in society. (5)

De Groot suggests that two things have gone largely unaudited by academic historians. Firstly he points out that popular engagement with history has recently undergone great shifts. It has become much easier for ordinary people to have access to the past without the help of professional historians due to advanced technology such as reality TV and web-based history resources. Secondly history has become increasingly omnipresent as a cultural, social and economic trope and genre. The historical sensibility and images provided by television

(3) Tom Griffiths, *Hunters and Collectors: The Antiquarian Imagination in Australia*, Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1996, pp.214-215; Graeme Davison, *The Use and Abuse of Australian History*, Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2000, p.180.

(4) Ludmilla Jordanova, *History in Practice*, 2nd.ed., London: Bloomsbury, 2006, pp.13-14, p.130.

(5) Jerome de Groot, *Consuming History: Historians and Heritage in Contemporary Popular Culture*, London and New York: Routledge, 2009, p.1.

producers, curators, novelists, playwrights and film-makers are multiple, prevalent, complex and unstable. History is "associated with nationhood, nostalgia, commodity, revelation and knowledge but also personal testimony, experience and revelation." The new ways of engaging with the past have not been well attended by academic historians.(6) I maintain that we need to examine various forms of history practiced in society before we understand the challenges to history in our present society.

Now I turn to my new favorites, Paul Ashton and Paula Hamilton. They are Australian historians who emphasize the importance of public history and argue that the nature of historical work and its role in society has already changed. They are intrigued, like the historians already-mentioned, by the contradiction between the claims by politicians and others about the lack of historical knowledge among the population and the phenomenal growth of popular interest in history in a myriad of forms. In other words academic history is declining while history in society is thriving. They say, "This growth in 'pastmindedness' was starkly contrasted with a decline in interest in formal History". The assumption of the lack of historical knowledge among students eventually led to the adoption of national curriculum for history as the ultimate result of the History Wars in Australia. The content of history has been the matter of heated controversy among politicians and historians, but all parties agree that students lack basic historical knowledge that must be rectified by the introduction of a national curriculum. However, at the same time scant attention has ever been paid to "the significant lineage of popular historical endeavors" .(7)

Ashton and Hamilton figuratively describe history in the present world as a house with many rooms. I like this metaphor so much that I often use it to introduce my lecture courses.

> Different groups inhabit the various quarters, including local and community historians, genealogists, specialist museum practitioners, makers of historical films and public historians. Some of these people inhabit more than one room while many make occasional visits to other parts of the house. And all of the rooms have internal divisions. Some residents, however - notably academic historians - see themselves occupying the principal room. Indeed, many from the academy insist that they are in possession of the house. But several of the residents are a little restless. And, particularly in recent years, they had been visited by often unwanted guests in the form of politicians and ideologues, who seem hell bent on establishing a set of rules in parts of the house while exhibiting no sign of leaving.(8)

This metaphor, I believe, succinctly depicts the situation of history in our society. They continue to talk about the effect of the History Wars.

---

(6) *Ibid.*, pp.3-4.
(7) Paul Ashton and Paula Hamilton, *History at the Crossroads: Australians and the Past*, Ultimo NSW: Halstead Press, 2010, p.10.
(8) *Ibid.*, p.8.

> In the house of history, the room of the critical historian may seem a little chilly. The moans of wounded cultural warriors might also keep some people away but these were only faintly heard in many parts of the house where denizens are otherwise preoccupied. Public historians work across the culture outside the academy in fields such as community history, heritage, museums and native title: a number of them attempt to form a bridge between the academy and other forms of popular history practice. Local historians are busy researching, writing and publishing. Significant numbers of locally produced books often outstrip commercial book runs and mainstream publishers have become increasingly attracted to local, family and community histories while publicly maintaining that, in the trade, 'history does not sell'. Genealogy is a major pastime. Memorials abound in the landscape as do local museums. Anniversaries and celebrations attract substantial public attention and history is popular in newspapers and other media. All manner of websites with historical connections abound.(9)

It appears that all forms of history are flourishing except academic history in Australia. Thus it does not seem to be a coincidence that most of academic historians are fully supportive of the adoption of national curriculum for history about which, I believe, historians elsewhere usually tend to be cautious and have more reservations because the national curriculum itself could become the means for nation-states to strengthen a nationalistic world view. This is another story and I want to return to the house of history.

The above quoted metaphor suggests that the room of academic historians is so cold that people tend to avoid it. It also indicates that historical activities in other forms go on without suffering any impact from the History Wars. The History Wars may be insignificant to most history practitioners who engage with the past in various capacities, hence its impact on historical consciousness may be infinitesimal except for those historians and politicians directly involved. Thriving engagements with the past appear to exist in many forms independent of the History Wars. Furthermore, more powerful economic forces in the modern world appear to work behind the history and culture wars and diverse historical activities.

The last two or three decades witnessed the revival of nationalism in the western world, to which, I suppose, Australia arguably also belongs to. The revitalization took many forms such as the history and culture wars, educational reforms like the introduction of civics education and the adoption of national curriculum, invigorated commemorations and ceremonies, reenactments of historical events, pilgrimages to historically significant sites, sport events, movies, fiction, animation, and web-sites. I argue that such recent revival of nationalism was basically a reaction to the effects of globalization, especially economic ones.

Many nation-states faced with the far reaching results of globalization have adopted

(9) *Ibid.*, p.9.

neoliberal economic policies, which have enlivened the sluggish economy by enabling it to cope with the highly competitive world market. However, they also have created a widening gap between rich and poor. Most governments reduced the expenditure on welfare and privatized basic utilities. Government service has been increasingly curtailed to the less wealthy, while states have become less and less necessary to wealthy investors and businessmen working beyond state boundaries. The ties between the states and their citizens have become weaker in terms of material benefits. Many governments such as Australia, USA, Britain and Japan have attempted to make up for the diminished material relationship between the states and their citizens by pursuing conservative cultural and social agenda. Nation-states endeavor to provide their citizens with a spiritual or ideological alternative to material benefits. The attempt to provide nominal benefits to counteract the effects of the decreasing material benefits has been considerably successful to the extent that conservative parties usually had maintained power until the economic crisis in 2008.

Successive Australian governments have utilized history as a psychological alternative to material benefits. It was evidently intended to reaffirm the bond between the state and its citizens in the era of diminishing returns to being citizens. The so called History Wars were events which flared up in this process.

The History Wars in Australia were a heated public debate mainly over the interpretation of Aboriginal history and exhibitions at the National Museum of Australia. Observers often emphasized the aspect that former Liberal PM, John Howard and his favorite historian, Geoffrey Blainey, stood starkly in opposition to former Labour PM, Paul Keating and the 'black armband history' they denounced. In other words, it was asserted that there was an unbridgeable chasm between the two view points, between 'rightwing nationalism' and 'leftwing multiculturalism'. From such a perspective, John Howard's neoliberalism, which absorbed Pauline Hanson's anti-immigration ideology, and Labour's multiculturalism, which offered an apology to the Aboriginal people and the stolen generations, were entirely irreconcilable. However, does the discourse of the great divide really reflect the difference of actual policies? What is the end result of the History Wars?

Despite Labour PM, Kevin Rudd's apology to Australia's Indigenous peoples, Australian government's Aboriginal policy has hardly revealed any improvement since Howard's Coalition government, which bitterly opposed the apology. The so called Northern Territory Intervention Policy has been maintained without any substantial change. Eviction of Aboriginal residents from public housing continue, while the supply of housing to Indigenous people had become increasingly mainstreamed. This entailed absorption of Indigenous-specific programs into public housing policy and service delivery systems and the simultaneous disempowering of Indigenous Housing Organizations.[10] The adoption or continuance of two contradictory

(10) Vivienne Milligan, Rhonda Phillips, Hazel Easthope, Edgar Liu and Paul Memmott, "Urban social housing for Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders: respecting culture and adapting services", AHURI Final Report No. 172, 2011, p.30; the

policies by the Labour Governments similar to the Coalition suggests the total lack of real initiatives on the Labour side except the exemplary discourse. The phrase "talk is cheap" seems to be most suitable as its description.

Actually there was a broad agreement between the Labour and the Coalition on history education, although they apparently clashed over the content. Even the apparent disagreement was less than real. The polarities were emphasized and similarities were ignored by the media and the opposing parties. Preeminent Labour Premiers such as Wayne Goss and Bob Carr expressed a similar view to the conservative side of politics. For example Wayne Goss rejected his own department's attempts to remove the offending representations of the Indigenous people from the previous sourcebook, and "argued that terms such as 'invasion' went too far".(11)

In 1994 PM Paul Keating announced the formation of the Civics Expert Group chaired by Professor Stuart Macintyre in order to promote civics and citizenship education. "The CEG specifically identified Australian History as an essential vehicle for education in civics and citizenship." In 1997 the Howard government announced support for the civics education by introducing *Discovering Democracy*, a new government civics and education initiative. The program reflected many of the recommendations made by the CEG including the need for the teaching of Australian history. The CEG was replaced by the Civics Education Group chaired by John Hirst. But Macintyre remained as a member of the Civics Education Group and has maintained a cordial relationship with Hirst since then. There was bipartisan support for the civics education even during the History Wars.(12)

This was the basis for the adoption of the first national curriculum for history in Australia. The Labour Party and the Liberal Party have disputed the content of the history curriculum. But they have been broadly in agreement about the need to establish national curriculum for history. History had been regarded by both parties as the pillar of civics education and considered essential for students to acquire the sense of belonging to the nation. In addition the Labour leaders, Kevin Rudd and Julia Guillard accepted part of the argument of Geoffrey Blainey. In 2009 Kevin Rudd called for a truce in the History Wars. *The Australian* reported, Rudd saying:

"It's time to leave behind us the polarisation that began to infect our every discussion of

---

authors argue that such "mainstreaming projects in housing, and across the Indigenous affairs domains, are justified with reference to policy discourse that highlights the supposed 'failures' of past 'segregationist' approaches and the need for 'social inclusion' and more 'integrated' approaches", however, they believe that "such a principle can result in homogeneity in policies and programs that are not culturally appropriate or responsive to the diversity of Indigenous needs and circumstances. They assert that "at worst, the result is imposition of dominant cultural norms that resemble past assimilationist policies."(ibid., pp.30-31).

(11) Anna Clark, *Teaching the Nation: Politics and Pedagogy in Australian History*, Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2006, p.40, p.48.

(12) See Jaime S.Dickson, "How and Why has Civics Education Developed to its Current Situation?", the common good: civics and citizenship education, 1998(Internet, 29 October 2013, http://www.abc.net.au/civics/teach/articles/jdickson/currentsit.htm#why).

> our nation's past, to go beyond the so-called black armband view that refused to confront some hard truths about our past, as if our forebears were all men and women of absolute nobility, without spot or blemish," he said, "But time, too, to go beyond the view that we should only celebrate the reformers, the renegades and revolutionaries, thus neglecting or even deriding the great stories of our explorers, of our pioneers, and our entrepreneurs." He called this "the best approach to the great stories that make up our national story". Mr Rudd described history as the memory of a nation: "Just as it's hard to imagine personality without memory, so too is it hard to imagine national identity without history. For individuals, memory also informs and shapes behaviour, and so it does with nations. "The histories they choose to embrace as their collective memory of the past become the foundations upon which they build their futures, sometimes consciously, other times not."(13)

In 2010 Julia Guillard, then Education Minister, defended the national curriculum for history by asserting that "It is neither black armband nor white blindfold."(14) Both of them may not entirely embrace the view of Geoffrey Blainey, but they at least accepted the rhetoric of a balanced view of history which was espoused by Blainey during the History Wars. New Prime Minister, Tony Abbott, believed that the national curriculum had "too great a focus on issues which are the predominant concern of one side of politics".(15) The battle over the content of national history may be reignited, but the national curriculum will stay as a new apparatus of the nation-states to make students to share the common knowledge including history.

The national history curriculum is intended by politicians to help young citizens imagine national identity and acquire a common knowledge in a national framework. Uniform history education throughout the nation-state is necessary for this purpose. However, despite this political agreement, students will probably continue to acquire a sense of the past, historical imagination and national identity more through other media than formal education.

Moreover nationalist imagination of politicians partly reflects the icons, symbols, images and sense of history conceived by ordinary Australians, which tend to emphasize traditional values of "the nation". The lower strata of society who are especially negatively affected by globalization become antagonistic to multiculturalist and progressive perspectives because of their assumed association with globalization. This is clearly illustrated by the fact that John Howard's tactical manipulation of British-Australian symbols, images and narratives succeeded in attracting the support of a large section of the lower working class. In reaction to the threat of globalization to their lives, many Australians are likely to more appreciate the value of the nation as a defense, hence the increasing popularity of traditional symbols and images of the Australian past. While the value of the state is reduced in terms of material relations for Australians, the

(13) *Australian*, 28 August 2009.
(14) *Sydney Morning Herald*, 8 March 2010.
(15) *Telegraph*, 3 September 2013.

value of the nation in terms of symbolic bondage is enhanced. However ineffective it may be, the nation is imagined as the last resort against the full effects of globalization and economic instability.

The revival of affection for the nation, national symbols, images, and narratives has been largely reinforced by the commodification of history. It is part of a universal tendency in the postmodern capitalist world, that is, the commodification of all forms of culture. History and the past in general have become commodities. They are now sold or freely available in various forms. Reenactments of historical events such as the First Fleet and Cook's voyages, sport events like the ANZAC Day football matches, history theme parks like Sovereign Hill, Ballarat extensively used historical images and narratives of British-Australian past. Local history museums, historic towns, converted old prisons and railway stations, serve to present traditional community lives and values. Icons, images, stories of the past separated from historical context have been utilized by advertisements, TV programs, films, popular books and websites.

In the process past images and history are mixed with various other types of information and have become an amalgam of entertainment, literature, history, science and so on. This cultural composite is decisive in creating a sense of history in the postmodern capitalism. Hayden White is partly correct. History has virtually become literature, but without plots, arguments, or hardly any ideology. The internet is the most likely place from which people obtain information. It is exactly the world which I have just described. Academic history comprises a tiny portion of the amalgam of knowledge and partly contributes to making sense of history and of the past as a portion of the composite. If academic history is used with some respect, it is because of traditionally claimed objectivity and professional skills, the claim which most historians now do not support.

Finally I want to turn to museums. They are usually thought of typical sites of public history and may be regarded as the bridge between academic history and history in society.

The number of museums in Australia had been less than 100 until the late 1950s, but it has increased dramatically with the establishment of new history museums in regional communities since then. It is estimated that at least more than 2000 museums now exist throughout Australia.(16) Those regional museums were pioneers in social history, as larger Federal and state museums had not seriously collected historical objects or showed any interest in presenting history exhibitions. The latter have become gradually involved in history exhibitions since the 1970s and new social history museums have been built since the 1980s. Their exhibitions have extended to women's history, ethnic history and contemporary Aboriginal history, which includes controversial themes such as invasion and stolen children. I want to deal with

(16) Australian Bureau of Statistics, '2007-8 Museums Australia' (cat. no. 8560.0), p.3; *History at the Crossroads,* p.75; Kylie Winkworth, 'Let a thousand flowers bloom: museums in regional Australia', in Des Griffin and Leon Paroissien, eds., *Understanding Museums: Australian museums and museology*, National Museum of Australia, 2011, p.1 published online at http://nma.gov.au/research/understanding-museums/_lib/pdf/Understanding_Museums_whole_2011.pdf.

those two types of museums separately.[17]

The National Museum became the battle ground of the History Wars as did several of State Museums. Prime Minister, Paul Keating. and the then Leader of the Opposition, John Howard, clashed over the interpretation of Australian history, which developed into the so-called History Wars in the 1990s. In 1996, when Howard became Prime Minister, conservative intellectuals waged a concerted attack on revisionist interpretations of Aboriginal history and multiculturalism, which they referred to as a black armband view of history. In 2001, when the National Museum opened, it immediately became the focus of intense debate. Conservative media commentators as well as council members of the Museum fiercely criticized the Aboriginal gallery for its alleged political bias. Dawn Casey, Director of the National Museum, defended the policy of the museum, but her contract was terminated and three council members who supported her were replaced by supporters of the government.

Casey thought of an ideal museum as a forum for the debate of contemporary issues, and she intended the National Museum to speak with many voices and promote useful debate about questions of diversity and national identity. She also promoted the idea that Indigenous people were equal partners in discussions about what material was to be exhibited, and how.[18] I argue that such a conception of the museum, which I called the 'postmodern museum', was partly responsible for the intervention of history warriors into the National Museum. The postmodern museum helps promote the cause of socially disadvantage people by including diverse perspectives of the past, but at the same time it eroded the claim of academic expertise and objectivity, which has been a major safeguard against an arbitrary political intervention.

Recognition of divergent versions of history and perspectives of the past by academic history strengthened the legitimacy of history in society. Historical perspectives and the sense of history among groups of people based on the claims of gender, race, ethnicity, religion, region and historical experience have become influential. History in society, not only in the diversity and volumes of information, but also in terms of social and theoretical legitimacy, is rapidly increasing its influence over academic history. Ironically the only apparent hope for academic history may probably be the national curriculum, an ideological weapon of the nation-states. Accordingly, we had better now pay more attention and respect to school history more than ever before.

In contrast to Federal and state museums, the regional museums of Australia have developed almost totally independent of academic history. They are literally representative of history in society. However, historians have tended to be contemptuous of them or totally ignore them as if they do not present proper history. Regional history museums have had changing fortunes, therefore never been stable, and have assumed a variety of forms. However, researchers regarded them as constant and described them as the anti-thesis of the modern museum. Graeme

(17) Margaret Anderson, 'Museums, history and the creation of memory: 1970-2008', in *Understanding Museums,* p.4, pp.6-7.
(18) Dawn Casey, 'The New Museum', paper delivered at the MAQ State Conference, 15-16 September 2001, Cairns.

Davison depicts them as "an abomination to the modern museologist', having 'no discernible themes, the handwritten captions are amateurish and little attention is paid to chronology, context or interpretation".[19] Chris Healy, an Australian historian, when he visited one of such museums, wrote:

> Yet the museum employed none of the means by which visitors have been trained to understand and interpret objects on display — the devices of category, of narrative sequence, of juxtaposing the typical and the singular, or of generating aesthetic wonder. It seemed instead as if the objects were condemned to merely evoke associations, to trigger trace memories, to generate questions, confusion or fragmentary recognition. It was a strange memory palace which seemed more like a cabinet of curiosity than a museum.[20]

Although such a view is now gradually replaced by other perspectives which recognize the diversity and vitality of regional museums, the impression is that local history museums are guarded by Anglo-Celtic volunteers who stick to a white middle class pioneering and settler story.[21] It is also assumed that those museums are rarely visited. They therefore are not important in a consideration of the state of history. However, the Pigott Report, the Report of the Committee of Inquiry on Museums and National Collections in 1975, stated "In the last fifteen years hundreds of small museums have been founded as a result of the quickening interest in Australian history. This has been primarily a grass-roots movement, one of the most unexpected and vigorous cultural movements in Australia in this century."[22]Ignoring such a significant cultural movement is conspicuous when we think of academic articles where smallest of small events are meticulously studied.

In terms of the number of visitors, it is true that many local history museums are daily visited by only a dozen of people, but how often is an ordinary academic article read per day? The number of visitors to a regional museum usually amounts to a few thousands per year, and there are at least more than a thousand museums in Australia. In total they have millions of visitors every year. In addition thousands of volunteers work for local museums every day. Even in the internet age the direct contact of large number of people and visiting experience seem to be very important to make sense of the past in Australia. In an age in which the line between the study of history and sense of the past is increasingly obscured, we need to appreciate the practice of history and its impact outside of academia. Regional history museums are extremely important to understand history in our age. E.H.Carr mentions:

---

(19) Graeme Davison, *The Use and Abuse of Australian History*, Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2000, p.164.

(20) Chris Healy, *From the Ruins of Colonialism: History as Social Memory*, Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1996, pp.77-78.

(21) Viv Szekeres, 'Museums and multiculturalism: too vague to understand, too important to ignore' in Des Griffin and Leon Paroissien, eds., *Understanding Museums: Australian museums and museology*, National Museum of Australia, 2011, pp.1-2.

(22) *Museums in Australia 1975: Report of the Committee of Inquiry on Museums and National Collections including the Report of the Planning Committee on the Gallery of Aboriginal Australia*, Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1975, p.21.

> the nineteenth-century heresy that history consists of the compilation of a maximum number of irrefutable and objective facts. Anyone who succumbs to this heresy will either have to give up history as a bad job, and take to stamp-collecting or some other form of antiquarianism, or end in a madhouse. It is this heresy which during the past hundred years has had such devastating effects on the modern historian, producing in Germany, in Great Britain, and in the United States, a vast and growing mass of dry-as-dust factual histories, of minutely specialized monographs of would-be historians knowing more and more about less and less, sunk without trace in an ocean of facts.(23)

The present historians would immediately deny the heresy without hesitation. However, it appears to me that a large number of academic articles are best described as "minutely specialized monographs of would-be historians knowing more and more about less and less, sunk without trace in an ocean of facts", even though they might not be "dry-as-dust factual histories" because of attached quite familiar theoretical frameworks. It is hardly surprising that the present academic history is in decline in the postmodern capitalist world where every knowledge and culture is commodified. I do not know where the way out is, but the present course will lead to another cabinet of curiosity.

(23) *Ibid*., p.15.