

特集II US Cultural Diplomacy in Asia: Strategy and Practice

Introduction: Why Cultural Diplomacy Matters

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A four-year research project entitled “The Development and Present Condition of US Cultural Diplomacy in Asia” has been conducted since 2003 by a group of scholars from diverse fields of history, sociology, anthropology, political science, and cultural geography. With Masako Notoji, Director of the Center for Pacific and American Studies, as the project leader, and a generous financial support from the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research (A), the group was able to study aspects of cultural activities and exchange between the United States and Asian countries in the fields of information, ideology, and arts, which include popular cultural expressions, so as to understand better the complexities and political implications of cultural production and consumption across national boundaries.

In the background of this project is the large-scale reduction in public diplomacy activities by the US government since the end of the Cold War, and particularly the controversy over the apparently diminishing cultural profile of the US in inverse proportion to its growing political and military presence in the world. The scholars involved in the project held a number of seminars on individual themes during the past three years, and a final session was held on September 30, 2006, in which three papers were presented. Scholars and other professionals, including those in diplomatic circles, were also invited to participate in the symposium for a highly involved discussion on related issues.

What follows below are the papers presented at the symposium and the comments on each of the papers. A full volume of the papers by the members of the project is to be published separately as a final report of the project.