

Refugees or Settlers?  
Area Studies,  
Development Studies,  
and the Future  
of Asian Studies

by Bruce M. Koppel

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EAST-WEST CENTER  
OCCASIONAL PAPERS  
Education and Training Series  
No. 1, April 1995



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*About the Author*

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The Program on Education and Training at the East-West Center is pleased to have Bruce Koppel's *Refugees or Settlers? Area Studies, Development Studies, and the Future of Asian Studies* as its first East-West Center Occasional Paper. This thoughtful, insightful, yet sobering essay will provide much needed "food for thought" on a topic that is being discussed at many major research universities. Any university that is rethinking the relative roles of area studies, development studies, the social sciences, and the humanities, will find this document of great assistance. Everyone interested in the topic will welcome the conceptual and organizational wisdom contained in it. As a timely, creative, and forward-looking appraisal of the present crisis in international studies, it will be of great interest to academic and policy communities as well as public and private funding sources.

Larry E. Smith  
Director  
Program on Education and Training  
East-West Center

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## ABSTRACT

The evolution of scholarship about Asia in the United States is at a pivotal point—intellectually, institutionally, and financially. Outside the core social science and humanities disciplines, scholarship about Asia has evolved in two principal directions: area studies and development studies. The evolution of Asian studies and development studies over the last four decades also reflects the changing status of international studies within American universities as well as the changing agendas of government, foundation, and corporate interests. Within and across the two fields, there are significant oppositional movements. The question arises: is the fragmentation both within and between Asian studies and development studies part of a sustainable future for dynamic scholarship about Asia or will it constrain such a future? Are these two fields essentially *refugees* from disciplinary dissension—implying that the future lies in the restoration of intellectual solidarity within the disciplines and their consolidation of institutional preeminence? Or are they *settlers* of new domains—implying that the future may lie in these new domains but with neither field necessarily as it is today?

The key is to reassess boundaries. The highest priority should be assigned to the joint exploration of the common intellectual and institutional ground between area studies and development studies about Asia. The fundamental task for leadership is to help the various scholarly communities to recognize that their traditional positions of autonomy and privilege cannot be maintained if scholarship about Asia is to restore its dynamism, legitimacy, and relevance. What is needed is not simply a revised agenda or a new list of priority

topics for scholarship about Asia—that would be normal science in international scholarship and business-as-usual in research funding. What is needed first of all is a reconstruction of the intellectual and institutional pathways for learning about Asia. Issues of agenda setting and funding modalities must be derived from that reconstruction.

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In the 1990s, it is increasingly apparent that international scholarship in the United States about Asia needs to justify itself—in how it is organized, in the modes through which it is conducted, and in the manner by which it is supported politically and financially. This need for justification is a reflection of problems that have accumulated within the scholarship itself as well as the consequences of its significantly changing environment: an academic community buffeted by a number of complex internal and external changes, a policy community less willing to accept entitlement of international studies, and a public community troubled by the significance of diversity abroad and the challenges of multiculturalism at home. Failure to address this challenge will not mean the end of education and research about Asia in the United States, of course, but the way we confront the challenge will have significant implications for the quality and influence of research and education in the United States about Asia.

This essay addresses the challenge through an analysis of contemporary scholarship about Asia. Specifically, I want to explore the coevolution of area studies and development studies about Asia in American universities and colleges as alternatives to classical disciplinary learning, especially in the social sciences. The origins and consequences of this coevolution are treated here as both intellectual and institutional problems. This analysis leads to assessments of patterns of competition and convergence—among the fields; within professional communities; and between the fields and their institutional, political, and financial contexts. The discussion then turns to several crucial choices for the future of international scholarship about Asia, focusing again on the interrelations among the social sciences, Asian studies, and development studies about Asia. Strong emphasis will be

given to issues of boundary crossing—in both intellectual and institutional terms—and the need for a variety of new dialogues and engagements. What is needed is not simply a revised agenda or a new list of priority topics for scholarship about Asia—that would be routine procedure in international scholarship and business-as-usual in research funding. What is needed first of all is a reconstruction of the intellectual and institutional pathways for learning about Asia. Agenda setting and modes of funding must be derived from that reconstruction.

Area studies is defined here as a strategy for building understanding based on the holistic analysis of a specific place or culture. At its best, this analysis combines language, humanities, and the social sciences to build knowledge that is both systematic and contextual. Knowledge is accumulated with reference principally to specific language and culture areas. The program staff in an area studies program represents the humanities (especially history and linguistics) and the social sciences, and usually all faculty will have significant language facility and extensive field experience in a particular language and culture area.

Development studies is defined here as a strategy for understanding based on the holistic analysis of processes and problems associated with social, economic, and political change. This field is based on transdisciplinary and frequently comparative applications of the social sciences. The objective is to build knowledge that contributes to comparative understanding and suggests applications of social science to policies and projects. For development studies (and also for disciplinary studies), the region is not the context for knowledge accumulation; rather, it is an arena where concerns about theory and method can be examined. The program staff associated with a development studies program comes predominantly from the social sciences, especially in programs that offer graduate degrees. Most faculty do not have fluent foreign language skills, and only some have extensive field experience in a specific setting.

For both area studies and development studies, there is

a presumption that adequate understanding demands holistic analysis (where holistic can be translated as cross-disciplinary). By contrast, disciplinary studies emphasize the refinement of theory and method within the context and discourse represented by a discipline's defined domain. Faculty in a disciplinary department usually share a common disciplinary background, but the orientations of their work will vary—often intensely—according to the subfields and alternative paradigms within the discipline. Contention within the disciplines is an important dimension of the context for area studies and development studies. This contention can be substantial, as evidenced for example by current debates within the academy on what constitutes “real” political science, sociology, economics, and so on. Until recently, neither language facility nor extensive field experience has been necessarily associated with international scholarship in the humanities and social sciences disciplines.

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**THE LANDSCAPE:  
TRANSFORMATIONS  
AND ASYMMETRIES**

Between the 1950s and 1970s, Asian studies in various forms grew and thrived on the campuses of many American universities and colleges. Extradepartmental regional, subregional, and national programs and various cross-disciplinary interdepartmental initiatives proliferated outside the conventional disciplinary and departmental preferences of university organization. Much of this growth was financed and encouraged by the largesse of the federal government (especially through the leverage of Title VI and Fulbright support)—which saw a strategic justification for supporting Asian and other area studies—and major foundations, some of which had helped to pioneer American academic interests in Asia.<sup>1</sup> In the 1960s and 1970s, this growth was further impelled by expanded support for international educational exchange involving both students and faculty from the United States and Asia. Of special importance during this period was the role

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1. State support was also important, especially in California, Michigan, and New York.

of young Americans—including returned Peace Corps volunteers as well as veterans of the Vietnam War and the anti-war movement—who gravitated to courses and later academic careers in Asian studies.

This picture of growth, dynamism, and apparent independence from university organizational norms is no longer completely valid. While the number of programs, centers, and committees focused on Asian studies (or some subregional or country variant) remains large and is even growing among four-year colleges, the finances, staffing, and political status of many of the programs are very limited. In many universities and colleges, political and financial support for independent area studies programs—and closely associated language training programs—has weakened. The end of the Cold War has raised new questions about the strategic requirement for federal support of area studies. And recent political transformations in Washington are raising serious questions about the future of federal support for international education. But even before the end of the Cold War and prior to the 1994 Congressional elections, fiscal conservatives were beginning to question the economic priority of federal support for area studies.

Indeed, the erosion of federal support significantly predates the end of the Cold War and the onset of fiscal conservatism in the 1990s. In constant dollar terms, for example, Title VI support declined 40 percent from the mid-1960s to the early 1990s (55 percent compared with the original Title VI functions).<sup>2</sup> In constant 1991 dollars, the appropriation for

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2. Title VI of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (originally Title VI of the National Defense Education Act of 1958) has been the major federal initiative for strengthening American education in foreign languages and in area and international studies. Ten major domestic programs are authorized under Title VI: National Resource Centers, Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowships, Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign Language Programs, International Research and Studies Projects, Business and International Education Projects, Intensive Summer Language Institutes, International Business Education Centers, Language Resource Centers, the Foreign Periodicals Program (scheduled for elimination in 1995), and American Overseas Research Centers. Over 75 percent of the funding goes for the National Resource Centers, the Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowships, and the *International Business Education Centers*. For analyses of the original legislation and its impacts see Clowse (1981), Diekhoff (1965), and Hucker (1973).

Title VI in fiscal year 1967 was \$63,521,000. This amount was for language and area centers, fellowships, research and studies, and language institutes. The funding for these functions in fiscal year 1991 was \$28,337,000. For all functions (including business and international education, undergraduate international studies, and foreign language), funding in fiscal year 1991 was \$40,012,000.

Several times the program has faced the possibility of zero funding. In the 1990s, small increases in Title VI funding (up in real terms by about 1 percent a year from 1991 to 1995) have led some in the area studies community to think the support is insulated from cutbacks. In the case of support for the National Resource Centers (the largest single allocation in Title VI), however, the commitments to award continuations (since commitments are normally made for three years) and the need to increase award sizes in order to cover comparable purposes means that the number of new awards for these centers will decline dramatically in 1995. Moreover, maintaining level funding for the National Resource Centers comes at a cost to other parts of the Title VI program: undergraduate international studies and foreign language programs (down 21.5 percent in nominal terms from 1993 to 1995), international research and studies projects (down 11.8 percent in nominal terms from 1993 to 1995), and business and international education programs (down 31.7 percent in nominal terms from 1993 to 1995).

The Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowships (FLAS) component of Title VI supports academic year and summer fellowships for graduate-level training at institutions of higher education having nationally recognized programs of excellence. In the mid-1960s, more than 2,500 FLAS academic year fellowships were being awarded each year. Since the mid-1980s, that number has been in the 600 to 800 per year range (CRS 1985, 405; Greenwood 1991a, 1991b; CIE 1994). Some 650 awards are expected to be made in 1995. This number reflects a mixture of declining resources, increasing stipends and average award sizes, rising tuition rates, and diminishing capacities by many institutions to contribute

financially in customary ways (through tuition remissions, reduced tuition rates, and the like). In 1983–84, for example, the average FLAS academic year award was \$7,426. By 1990–91, the average was up to \$12,189 (CIE 1994, 2). Today there are at least 131 centers, programs, and committees for Asian studies in 101 American universities and colleges. Of these, 15 designated as National Resource Centers and 42 designated as FLAS programs—42 centers overall coming from 26 institutions—received support for the 1991–93 Title VI cycle.

Over the long term, support has declined in real terms—a fact that has been obscured by the rise in support from several government sources since the mid-1980s.<sup>3</sup> This rise, however, must be examined carefully. In the case of Title VI, for example, appropriations increased by 30 percent from 1984 to 1995 in real terms. But the obligations of the program increased as well, especially to cover business education.<sup>4</sup> Thus the funds available for the other pre-existing components did not increase significantly, and in some instances (such as foreign language and area studies fellowships) rising costs outran increases in Title VI funding.

Title VI has been an important form of programmatic as well as project support. Deterioration of this support places an increasing burden on university financing, but university funding itself has become less robust in recent years. In these circumstances, it is important to consider the composition as well as the level of funds that are available from sources outside the university. Table 1 provides financial data on the Fulbright Students and Scholars programs for East Asia and

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3. In the early 1980s, serious attempts were made to eliminate funding for international education. As described by Cassandra Pyle, executive director of the Council for International Exchange of Scholars during 1981–92: "It was a war and we went to the streets. We not only won, we won big" (Rubin 1995, A15).

4. The Business and International Education component provides matching grants to institutions of higher education for projects carried out in partnership with a business enterprise, trade organization, or association engaged in international trade. The Centers for Business Education component provides grants for eligible institutions of higher education—separately or in combination—to share the cost of planning, establishing, and operating multidisciplinary educational centers on international trade.



the Pacific administered by the United States Information Agency (USIA). As can be seen in Table 1, the overall level of funding between 1984 and 1994 for academic programs increased by 30 percent in real terms—similar to Title VI. While funding for lecturers and researchers changed little, funding for students (especially foreign students) increased substantially—although most of the growth was achieved by large increases in 1994. Because of cuts in 1995 in the USIA budget and likely cuts in the following years, it may be more appropriate to consider the averages of the early 1990s as the trend line. From that perspective, the funding declined for researchers and lecturers, held steady for American students, and increased for foreign students.<sup>5</sup> As we shall see, this is an important pattern given the increasing access of Asian students to higher education in the United States and the declining resources available to Americans who wish to pursue academic careers with an Asian focus.

Long-term erosion of federal financial support—along with more recent budgetary pressures affecting both public and private universities and shifts in campus priorities—have all combined to lower tolerance for prospective new fields, such as area studies and development studies, and strengthen preferences for established fields. While in numerical terms the majority of graduate students interested in Asia were always to be found in the social science and humanities disciplines rather than area studies programs, in many universities and colleges area studies programs enjoyed preferential standing in terms of funding, staffing, research support, and administrative prerogatives. During the last decade, however, there has been a restoration of preference for discipline-oriented organization and resource allocation for international studies. In many instances, attention has turned to the global context of economic, environmental, energy, demographic, health, and other issues—global because these issues

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5. Table 1 refers only to the Fulbright programs administered by USIA. USIA has other programs that bring emerging leaders in politics, business, and academic life to the United States.

**Table 1.** USIA international educational programs for East Asia and the Pacific (1990 dollars)

Academic programs	1984	1985	1986	1987
Foreign lecturers	584,622	690,371	632,975	769,026
U.S. lecturers	2,774,689	3,590,385	3,281,731	3,232,212
Foreign researchers	1,625,969	2,075,893	1,411,569	1,273,276
U.S. researchers	1,200,148	1,591,692	1,113,838	1,516,241
Foreign students	1,869,020	2,449,181	2,425,730	2,179,838
U.S. students	1,070,427	1,153,923	875,159	1,274,985
Foreign student renewals	1,601,215	1,519,866	1,592,048	1,785,924
Grantee program <sup>a</sup>	12,103,833	14,720,466	13,229,571	14,084,112
Foreign government contribution	2,308,925	2,666,655	3,067,792	3,394,569
Net appropriation <sup>b</sup>	13,534,453	16,179,747	14,114,076	15,348,041

a. Grantee program total also incorporates nongrant programs and administrative expenses.

b. Net appropriation is net also of reimbursements, cooperation with private institutions, and other academic program expenses.

Source: USIA, Office of the Comptroller.

do not always appear to be adequately addressed in national or regional contexts alone. These shifts, along with the end of the Cold War, have led to the dissipation of compelling strategic rationales for federal support of Asian studies. Many private foundation agendas have also withdrawn support for Asian studies programs.<sup>6</sup>

That this is happening in the 1990s, however, reflects a fundamental asymmetry:

Today the basic infrastructure of foreign language and area studies at U.S. universities is eroding at the very time the world order is being dramatically, and unpredictably, transformed. Another problem is generational. Most of today's foreign area specialists entered the field in the 1960s and early 1970s as the result of NDEA Title VI. But the end of rapid growth for U.S. universities and the decline of funding for foreign language and area studies led students to seek other fields (Merkx 1991, 23).

America's involvement in Asia has increased significantly over the last two decades. Today it is not hyperbolic to speak of a Pacific Century and the urgent need to understand the region in order to compete there. John Bresnan's (1994) phrase, "from dominoes to dynamos," and James Abegglen's (1994) reference to a "sea change" capture the essence of the scale of the transformation.

Fiscal year						
1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994
500,202	378,036	39,289	277,449	71,299	260,316	255,165
2,994,454	3,166,311	1,727,416	2,387,628	2,600,120	2,605,278	2,552,971
1,702,559	1,570,581	1,976,641	1,629,278	1,953,030	1,802,518	1,766,753
1,564,361	1,023,925	1,415,563	926,170	1,149,849	1,570,067	1,538,795
2,031,694	1,706,636	2,590,409	1,808,555	2,438,217	2,985,494	3,901,879
1,124,345	1,125,736	937,073	1,201,806	1,049,130	1,282,638	1,723,162
1,418,968	1,267,946	1,073,760	852,150	1,152,037	1,580,728	1,906,264
14,094,431	13,293,957	13,530,000	12,573,473	14,044,860	16,017,320	18,335,586
3,457,469	3,778,394	3,564,944	3,605,709	3,810,913	3,855,986	3,776,801
13,341,058	11,484,725	12,082,292	11,978,260	12,698,433	15,412,531	17,531,999

There are many ways to measure increased American involvement with the Asia-Pacific region. The earlier emphasis on strategic interests remains, but America's former hegemony in the region is challenged by the rise of several middle-range powers within Asia, the growing importance of multilateralism,<sup>7</sup> and the increasing salience of economic security compared with conventional security issues. A second way to measure increased American involvement with

6. These problems, however, are not universal. Writing about Australia, Richard Gerhmann (1994, 153) describes a somewhat different problem: "The recent surge in government interest in 'Asia' has been a blessing for Asianists in the sense that we are now seen as being relevant rather than ephemeral or marginal, but the increase in funding and courses brings concerns relating to the quality of education in our area." In March 1994, the European Science Foundation established a European Committee for Advanced Asian Studies to strengthen the coherence of Asian studies in Europe and "give this field greater political weight and visibility at the European level." Thommy Svensson, chair of the committee, points out that "European research displays a fragmented picture." This fragmentation, he observes, "promotes pluralism and different intellectual perspectives, which contribute to critical scholarship. But it is also a weakness, which prevents the creation of a critical mass necessary to manage large programmes and achieve political influence" (Svensson 1994, 5). For additional perspectives on Asian studies in Europe, see the collection of short but interesting pieces in IIAS (1994).

7. Multilateral organizations such as APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) and PECC (Pacific Economic Cooperation Council) have become major regional institutions and important forums for discussing economic and trade issues among countries in the region.

the Asia-Pacific region is demographic and can be seen through immigration statistics. Asian-Americans with roots in East and Southeast Asia have become an important part of the American social fabric—with significant cultural, economic, and political consequences. Another is in terms of trade and investment flows. In the last few years, for example, Americans have invested billions of dollars in Asian equity funds and continuing investment from Asia into the United States is an important component of U.S. economic growth. The daily display of Asian market indexes and exchange rates on the evening news across the United States would have appeared unthinkable 20 years ago.

This increasing interdependence is reflected in growing competence about Asia in many American corporations and investment firms. All this reflects a point that has been recognized for some time (McDonnell 1983; CRS 1985, 410-411) but still not fully understood: many students who pursue advanced graduate work in fields related to Asia do go on to work, not in academic settings, but in a variety of international organizations, banks, investment firms, and corporations. Even so, there are serious shortfalls in competence. For example, 59 percent of the 450,000 foreign students in the United States in 1993-94 were from Asia—up from 30 percent in 1954-55 and 42 percent in 1984-85 (Davis 1994, 6):

While undergraduates greatly outnumber graduate students among most regional groups, this is not the case with students from Asia, the majority of whom (50.5%) are enrolled at the graduate level. . . . Students from East Asia (50.8%) . . . are predominantly graduate. . . . The majority of students from South and Central Asia are graduate (66.7%), due in large part to the fact that 79.1% of the Indians, the largest group from this region, are studying at this level (Davis 1994, 44).

These are some of the many indicators of the deepening engagement with the United States by many in Asia. Yet a recent Carnegie Endowment study (1994, 23) points out that "our knowledge of Asia remains strikingly inadequate. American attendance of Asian universities is extremely limited,

and American tourism to Asia is significantly less than Asian travel here. We are accumulating a cultural deficit that could loom large in our efforts to advance the creation of a Pacific community."

Hence the asymmetries: While it is clear that the United States has substantial and growing interests in Asia, it is less clear that commitments will be forthcoming to understand Asia which are fully commensurate with those interests. While there is evidence of a declining financial and administrative status for independent Asian studies programs in universities and colleges, there is also evidence of expanding interest and competence about Asia elsewhere in academe as well as outside the universities and colleges. This interest is expressed, for example, by increasing numbers of students outside Asian studies who want to do dissertations in Asia, but who—like the students in Asian studies—cannot find research support.

In 1973–74, for example, there were 194 applications for support from the Fulbright student program for doctoral research in the Asia-Pacific area: 25 were awarded, 169 were turned down. In 1983–84, there were 283 applications: 43 were awarded, 240 were turned down. In 1993–94 there were 450 applications: 126 were awarded, 324 were turned down (see Table 2 on page 52). While the number of awards rose—especially in the early 1990s—the rejection rate remained over 70 percent. However, 25 percent of those who did not receive grants in the early 1990s—almost as many as those who did receive grants—were judged qualified to receive grants if funds and slots had been available. Rejection rates and application numbers ran highest for East Asia (IIE 1993). Funding since 1993 has essentially been unchanged.

A similar story can be seen with the Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad Fellowships: the total number of awards has been declining over the last 15 years while the number and quality of applications has been rising. In 1984–85, some 42 awards were given for research in Asia from 115 applications. For 1994–95, some 27 awards were given from 199 applications. Competition is most

intensive for East Asia, where fewer than 8 percent of applications have been successful during the last two years (US/ED DDRA Program data). In constant 1991 dollars, the fiscal year 1991 appropriation of \$5,855,000 for the overall Fulbright-Hays program was 51 percent below the program's peak funding in fiscal year 1967 of \$12,061,000. (See Tables 3 and 4 on pages 54 and 56.). Funding since 1991 has declined further in both nominal and real terms to \$5,843,000 for 1995.

Growing interest in Asia is also illustrated by at least 90 centers for Asian studies that currently exist even though they do not receive Title VI support. Finally, corporate leaders have recognized the value of international education. As one executive put it: "International education, with the broad perspective it brings, may well be the sine qua non of success in a global marketplace" (Desruisseaux 1994c, A42; see also Collins 1994).<sup>8</sup>

The picture is complex. Today, in many universities and colleges, the numbers of students registering for courses about Asia are rising. But increasing proportions of these students are first-generation Americans of Asian descent who want to know more about themselves. Their interests are biographical as well as professional. There has also been a significant expansion in the numbers of students from Asia—especially China and South Korea—who enroll in these courses. Their interests are professional and, increasingly, vocational with specific hopes for postgraduate employment in the United States. Both American and Asian students who have career interests in Asia have increasingly chosen specializations in the social science disciplines and the professional schools (especially business and international affairs). A recent review of FLAS support concluded: "Significantly lower proportions of actual degrees (M.A.s and Ph.D.s) are in

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8. This statement should not be taken as an absolute. As Richard Lambert (1990a, 57) puts it: "Even when far-seeing corporate leaders express regret about the lack of cosmopolitanism in American business in general, individual corporations, even those from which the chief executive officer who voices such regrets comes, tend to preserve the old corporate culture." This observation may be truer, however, for corporations that have not really extended themselves internationally.

area studies and the traditional core disciplines [history and language], while higher proportions of graduate degrees are in economics and other social sciences and several of the professional fields" (CIE 1994, 6). Sometimes students opt for interdisciplinary programs other than area studies—most notably development studies—where issues of international social, economic, and political change are interpreted.

There is both intellectual and institutional disquiet in Asian studies and international studies about Asia. In an important article in the Social Science Research Council publication *Items*, Stanley Heginbotham lays out what many see as the central challenge confronting international scholarship about Asia:

The end of the cold war has far more significant implications for international scholarship and exchange programs than is immediately apparent. This is a troubling reality for many of us as scholars and as members of scholarly institutions because we seek to organize, promote, and conduct scholarship based on scholarly criteria, independent of the shifting tides of public and foreign policy and the changing priorities of federal agencies and private foundations. That goal is important and we need to hold firm to principles of scholarly autonomy. At the same time, we need to be aware of the ways in which current patterns of organization for international scholarship have their roots in past public and foreign policy and funder priorities. Since many of these roots are associated with the cold war and were established long before most of us began our professional careers, we are predisposed to accept them as organizational givens in the organization of international scholarship. Unless we become conscious of their origins, however, we are in danger of attributing those aspects of organization to "scholarly criteria" and closing our eyes to opportunities for change that will strengthen the funding bases, and hence the quality and independence, of international scholarship (Heginbotham 1994, 33).

He concludes that while decision makers in the government and not-for-profit sectors will proceed to "shape new programs and new budgets to respond to what they understand of new realities . . . American international scholarship has an important contribution to make if it chooses to engage with

such institutions in a common search for understanding and insight" (Heginbotham 1994, 40).

This argument touches many nerves in the foundation, government, and academic communities about the future of international research and educational exchange (Desruisseaux 1994a, 1994b)—not least for what it implies about the future substance and politics of scholarship about Asia and its relationships, conscious or accidental, to American political and strategic interests. Some see in the argument the opportunity and even the demand for new intellectual and organizational trajectories; others see admonitions to recall the virtue of established pathways. In a context of diminished funding and political support from both foundation and federal government sources, these reactions have posed a fundamental question: In the post-Cold War environment, what is the future of scholarship on Asia?

Today it is clear that the future of intellectual leadership for studies on Asia is not necessarily with programs of Asian studies. One indicator is that in the 1990s, about one of ten students going to Asia each year to do dissertation research in the social sciences or humanities will receive a doctorate in Asian studies or one of its subregional fields, compared with one in seven students in the early 1980s (NCES 1993, 1994). This is only an estimate, but it is consistent with a recognized trend over the last decade: the increasing use of the disciplines for pursuing graduate interests in scholarship on Asia.

There are doubts about the continued viability of the area studies model—a model for learning and training built explicitly around the conjunction of language and literary training with other humanities and social sciences that are focused on the cultural area associated with specific languages (Hall 1947; Hucker 1973). The model assumes that linguistic competence yields a form of ethnographic transparency, a type of equivocation which legitimates the representational claims that area studies wants to produce. While the linguistic foundations of area studies may be explicitly comparative, excessive turns toward a philology separated from



language learning has undermined integration within area studies and supported particularism and segmentation instead. Today, despite the importance of language training to the Asian area studies centers (and to federal support of those centers), it is not an exaggeration to conclude that language training has assumed a service role rather than a foundation role in many instances. This is significant because area studies without a fundamental conjunction of language, humanities, and social sciences may very well be incomplete.

Not surprisingly, then, there is a continuing challenge from other corners for leadership in international scholarship about Asia. From the humanities side of Asian studies, for example, cultural studies is continuing the challenge begun by Edward Said's classic critique of theorizing in area studies (Said 1978). Cultural studies, as used here, refers to an emerging discourse located principally but not exclusively in the humanities and concerned with contested representations of culture, especially where such contestation has significant political stakes. Writing about the varieties of cultural studies, James Clifford (1991, 6) adds: "a great deal could be said about their inner complexities, disagreements, and local-global predicaments. What they share is an overall shift of attention toward the contested edges of cultures, nations, and identities. And they grapple with a world that articulates important cultural differences in contexts of historical, political, and economic interconnection." An extended quote from Vicente Rafael (1994, 1-2) nicely captures the heart of the cultural studies perspective on area studies:

If it is possible then to speak of the cultures of area studies in the United States, one might think of them as ensembles of knowledges and practices grounded on specific linguistic competencies and formulated within as well as across disciplinary boundaries. Furthermore, such grounding, and the disciplinary demarcations they presume, is underwritten by a discourse of liberal pluralism. For this reason, area studies not only reiterate different versions of Orientalism; they also produce by necessity multiple repudiations of these versions. What is significant then about area studies is not so much the unsurprising point that they are tied to Orientalist

legacies. Rather it is that since the end of World War II, area studies have been integrated into larger institutional networks ranging from universities to foundations that have made possible the reproduction of a North American style of knowing, one that is ordered towards the proliferation and containment of orientalisms and their critiques. Furthermore, it is a style of knowing that is fundamentally dependent on, precisely to the extent that it is critical of, the conjunction of corporate funding, state support, and the flexible managerial systems of university governance characteristic of liberal pluralism.

The cultural critique of Asian studies has already had a significant impact on the intellectual agenda of Asian studies—especially through the work of Asianists who are historians and anthropologists.

From the social science side, there was the growth of international and comparative interests within the disciplines as well as the emergence of various expressions of development studies as a transdisciplinary (and transregional) alternative to area studies. But unlike area studies, development studies was not the product of a vision for new modes of learning and training. Rather, it was a vessel that emerged for exploring interdisciplinary understanding of contemporary issues in political, social, and economic change. Today, development studies takes several names on American campuses: international studies, Third World studies, cross-cultural studies, and more. There are at least 133 such programs (Hoopes and Hoopes 1991), very similar to the number of Asian studies programs. Of the 133 development studies programs, 94 are exclusively undergraduate programs, 22 offer graduate degrees, and another 17 do not offer degrees but are sites for research and seminars. The high concentration of these programs at the undergraduate level reflects the high incidence of these programs at four-year colleges.

On the campuses, there is continuing tension between the social science and humanities departments, on the one hand, and both area studies and development studies programs on the other—tension over power and resources within the academe as well as competing claims to theoretical and methodological rigor. And outside the campuses, the grow-

ing influence of a variety of think tanks and policy forums—such as the Brookings Institution, the American Enterprise Institute, the Center for Strategic and International Studies, the Heritage Foundation, the Asia Society, and, since the late 1970s, the East-West Center—may be evidence of a deepening divide between the infrastructure for academic and policy-oriented understanding. Some of the independent think tanks may also prove to be bridges that span this divide. This will happen if they assume stronger educational—not necessarily degree-related—roles. If the universities accept this new development, will they simply be bowing to the limits of their own specialization or will they be abdicating their responsibilities to advance relevant competence?

While the end of the Cold War has given new impetus to questions about the need to support area studies, disquiet about the status of international scholarship—especially about Asia—is hardly new. (See, for example, Fenton 1947; Hall 1947; Bennett 1951; Axelrod and Bigelow 1962; Gibb 1963; Lockwood 1972; Hucker 1973; Lambert 1973; Lambert et al. 1984; Szanton 1976, 1984; Berryman et al. 1979; Morse 1984; NCASA 1991; Hirschman, Keyes, and Hutterer 1992; Pickert 1992; Chow 1993, 120–143.) Indeed the growth of cross-disciplinary fields such as Asian studies and development studies must be seen as a reaction to long-standing perceptions of limits within the normal discourse of specialized disciplinary life—especially requirements to emphasize the boundaries of conventional disciplinary debate over the interrelations of culture, history, economy, and politics. These concerns have been directed especially at the social sciences, where commitments to empiricism and comparative studies have been problematic for those insisting on the importance of cultural and historical context and where insistence on disciplinary theoretical advancement has been problematic for those with special interests in the problems of applying social science knowledge to issues of what has been known as “modernization.”

Thus a question about the future of Asian studies is not simply a question about Asian studies as a field. Rather,

it is a question about the future of scholarship about Asia. And two further questions should be seen in this context: Are Asian studies and development studies basically refugees from the disciplinary wars—which would imply that the future lies with the disciplines—or are Asian studies and development studies settlers of new intellectual territory beyond what the disciplines can hope to encompass? And if they are settlers, can they develop the new territory together or are there in fact many new territories?

To address these issues, a focus on the social science disciplines is appropriate because in most cases it is social science theories and methods that are applied and interpreted. In addition, many Asian studies programs are competing with social science departments for scarce staff positions, teaching and research assistants, and other funds and resources.<sup>9</sup> A focus on development studies is appropriate because development studies programs today appear to be considerably more hospitable than area studies or disciplinary programs for faculty and students with interests in applied social science and policy analysis. Moreover, many development studies programs too are competing with both the social science departments and the area studies programs for federal, foundation, and other funding.

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9. The same could be said about the changing relationships between Asian studies and the humanities—especially history, linguistics, art, and philosophy. The role of the humanities in most development studies programs is minimal at best. Consequently, competition for resources among area studies, development studies, and disciplinary departments has not involved the humanities nearly so much as it has the social sciences. This is not to suggest, however, that the humanities are not an issue—in intellectual or institutional terms—between area studies and development studies. As we shall see, the growth of a serious cultural critique within Asian studies and the emergence of a participatory action research critique within development studies can be seen as oppositional movements based on perspectives from the humanities. And while the humanities are obviously part of the traditional core of area studies—they receive about half of all FLAS awards—there have been important shifts in the composition of awards within the core. For South and Southeast Asia, for example, the proportion of FLAS awards going to students in history, language, and literature has been decreasing. For the 1988–91 cycle, only 4.2 percent of the South Asia awards and 2.3 percent of the Southeast Asia awards were for language and literature. History was a bit stronger: 8.7 percent and 10.3 percent respectively. By contrast, 22.6 percent of FLAS awards for South Asia and 20.2 percent for Southeast Asia went for anthropology (CIE 1994: 4).

COMPETITION  
AND  
CONVERGENCE

During the last four decades, intellectual and organizational relationships in the United States among area studies, development studies, and disciplinary studies on Asia have not been simple. The three communities clearly overlap—intellectually and in many cases institutionally—but the overlap is neither perfect nor planned. Patterns of competition and convergence have evolved—again in both intellectual and institutional terms.

The competition is not only the result of contending claims on the various resources of the universities where these different professional communities normally reside. The competition is a consequence also of differing patterns of legitimation inside and outside the university, differences in the norms and practices that characterize preferred styles of amassing and verifying “good” knowledge, and their diverse relationships to the politics of U.S. foreign policy toward Asia.

Legitimation of the social sciences within the university is the most secure, since it is based on the strength of the social science professional communities within academe and the financial support system (such as the National Science Foundation).<sup>10</sup> For Asian studies and development studies, legitimation has been more complex. It depends in part on extending the legitimacy of the social sciences from which they draw, in part on their sponsorship by government and foundations, and in part on their own success in constructing transdisciplinary professional groupings. Area studies programs and social science departments both rely heavily on traditional academic criteria to define excellence, although the social sciences place greater emphasis on contributions to theory. In some development studies programs, practices

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10. The security of the social sciences within the university is not absolute. As noted at several points in this paper, there are important interdisciplinary initiatives at many universities (outside of area and development studies) on issues such as political economy and gender studies, for instance. These initiatives are attracting attention from students interested in the courses and from administrators interested in keeping their institutions current. In most cases, however, the positions occupied by faculty involved with such interdisciplinary initiatives are still based in social science discipline departments.

differ little from their parent social science departments; in other programs, utility outweighs traditional academic criteria. In general, social science departments have had the most diffuse relationships to the politics of U.S. foreign policy toward Asia. Asian studies and development studies programs have had much more direct relationships. As we shall see, Asian studies have depended strongly on federal funding and in some cases (for example, China) on influencing and being influenced by U.S. policy—especially on political and security matters. Some development studies programs have also depended greatly on federal support for their work on U.S. political and strategic policy, but these programs have a stronger emphasis on international economic relations.

Despite these differences, area studies, development studies, and disciplinary studies on Asia are certainly not distinct. All three share, for example, a variety of debts and allegiances to the theories, methods, and professional communities associated with the social sciences—especially anthropology, economics, political science, and sociology. And all are under comparable pressures from students whose interests have increasingly turned to the instrumental value of their education.<sup>11</sup>

These characteristics of competition and convergence are not confined to the United States. Many social science faculty throughout Asia have been educated in American universities—in some cases with enough concentration in a few American universities and colleges to evoke references

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11. It can be argued that this is sometimes a misleading description—that the fundamental setting for area studies is the humanities. It is certainly true that in many area studies programs, the role of the humanities is substantial and that many of the smaller programs are simply appendages of language training and linguistics with little connection to the social sciences. The predominance of the humanities is a persistent self-conception within Asian studies, but it is not completely accurate. As we shall see, the critique of orientalism in area studies, the growing and indeed decisive importance of nonacademic postgraduate employment, and the impact of the cultural studies critique on conceptualization in the social sciences all suggest that while the whole story is not Asian studies and the social sciences, neither is the whole story Asian studies and the humanities. An important part (but not the only part) of the story for Asian studies—both intellectually and institutionally—is in its overlap with the social sciences.

to a "Mafia" of their alumni in specific fields.<sup>12</sup> Many American social science faculty have been involved in Asian universities through a variety of exchange and fellowship programs—most notably, in terms of sheer numbers, the Fulbright program, but also through university-based institution-building programs supported by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the World Bank, and the Ford Foundation.<sup>13</sup>

Not surprisingly, patterns of professional organization based on credentialism and shared areas of academic concentration, paradigm dominance, and political legitimation found in the United States are reproduced in different ways—some of them quite direct and deliberate—throughout Asia. (See Kaul 1975; Silcock et al. 1977; Gopinathan and Shive 1985; Abueva 1989; Altbach and Selvaratnam 1989; Altbach 1989; Yamamoto 1993.) These patterns of reproduction have been maintained through a variety of instruments ranging from access to Asian studies library collections in the United States (where the availability of "fugitive" materials frequently exceeds what is available in the home country), to assistance from American foundations for the replication of professional research coordination mechanisms originally developed in the United States and Europe (Naik 1971; Robinson 1974; Friis and Shonfield 1974), to the continuing roles of U.S. support for international social science research,<sup>14</sup> to the priority given in many cases to publication in "international" rather than Asian professional publications as a

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12. Examples in Southeast Asia include Berkeley in Indonesia and Williams in the Philippines for economics and Cornell in the Philippines and Thailand for sociology and anthropology.

13. The major vehicles for these relationships were the land grant universities in the United States. Typically these projects involved training staff from the Asian institution at the American institution and assigning faculty and sometimes American graduate students from the American institution to the Asian institution. The program between Cornell University and the University of the Philippines at Los Baños, for example, spanned several decades. For a thoughtful review of the experiences of the land-grant institutions see Hansen (1990).

14. Examples include the Ford and Asia Foundations on the private side and USAID on the government side. See Fisher (1993).

criterion for individual excellence and career progression.<sup>15</sup> As Altbach and Gopinathan (1985, 11) note for Southeast Asia: "One major consequence of the internationalization of the Asean academic community is that many First World research interests, paradigms, orientations and texts are commonplace in teaching and research in Southeast Asia." This is not to suggest the absence of an "indigenous" social science tradition in many parts of Asia nor to minimize the tension that exists between indigenous and international forces in shaping professional development patterns in Asian universities. (See Shonfield and Cherns 1971; Swasdiyakorn 1978; NRCP 1984; Altbach and Selvaratnam 1989; Ghee 1993). But it does suggest that the influence of contemporary American social science paradigms and professional organization patterns on the organization and practice of social science in many parts of Asia is not insignificant.

The major structural difference between the practice of social science-based area studies in American and Asian universities is, not surprisingly, that in Asia academically based area studies specialists are far less likely to find themselves working in area studies programs than their American counterparts; rather, they tend to end up in disciplinary or development studies programs.<sup>16</sup> And even this difference is diminishing rapidly with the decline in the number of FTE slots allocated to area studies programs in American universities.

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15. At major universities in the Philippines and Thailand, for example, one of the requirements for promotion to full professorship is publication in U.S. and European journals. These characteristics are not confined to the social sciences. In many of the biological and engineering sciences, where graduate education in the United States is also a common attribute of university faculty, patterns of professional behavior, organization, and rewards are in many ways even more closely and explicitly tied to U.S. patterns. To take a simple example, the Board for Science and Technology on International Development (BOSTID) of the National Academy of Sciences runs an international grant program to support research on major issues (such as biotechnology). The grants require not only collaboration between an American scientist as the "senior" investigator and a Thai scientist but also publication in the United States.

16. There are, of course, important exceptions such as the Institute for Southeast Asian Studies in Singapore, the Southeast Asian Studies Program at Kyoto University, and several of the institutes in the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.



Where there are area studies programs in Asian universities—as at the Institute for Southeast Asian Studies at Kyoto University—staffing patterns resemble those found in Asian studies programs in the United States. But there are also important differences. For example, in a few instances in Asia there has been some success in integrating natural scientists (such as ecologists) into area studies programs. This is a big step given the importance of natural resources and environmental issues to cultural and social formations throughout Asia. The U.S. Asian studies community, however, has been notable for its resistance on this point. At places like Cornell, Yale, Berkeley, and Hawai'i there have been strong faculties and programs in both Asian studies and natural sciences (agriculture and forestry). During the days of USAID funding, some links among area studies and natural science programs developed (especially at Cornell and Hawai'i), but today the links depend primarily on the ingenuity of students. Another example is the Pacific Science Association (PSA), a well-established transpacific association for exchanging research on scientific, technological, geographic, and cultural issues affecting the Asia-Pacific region. Area and technical specialists from Asia routinely participate in PSA meetings, but area specialists—with the exception of Pacific Island specialists—from American institutions rarely get involved.

More authentic evidence for professional recognition of distinct theoretical evolution can be found in the humanities—especially in art, history, linguistics, literature, philosophy, and religion. Yet the breach between the social sciences and the humanities that characterizes different forms of international studies in the United States—including area studies—can be seen as well throughout Asia. The major difference on this front is that the rise of cultural studies on many American campuses—and the challenge that cultural studies presents to an area studies community still redefining itself in response to an orientalist critique—is not directly paralleled on the campuses of many Asian universities. Issues of nationalism and religious and communal identity spark significant debates on many Asian campuses, and cer-

tainly these tensions affect the selection of issues in development research as well as styles of analysis. But these examples more closely parallel the politics of ethnic studies and multiculturalism on U.S. campuses rather than the politics associated with the cultural studies critique of area studies programs. Five issues stand out in evaluating competition and convergence among Asian studies, development studies, and the social sciences.

**Issue 1: modernization theory as a continuing issue.**

While the social sciences in recent years have turned back in the direction of the empiricist paradigm, intellectual dissent within Asian studies resulting from the growth of cultural criticism has led to attacks on one of the most powerful theoretical formulations of the empiricist program: modernization theory. Yet in rejecting modernization theory, concerns within the Asian studies community for the meaning of the modern and modernity have come into sharper focus as issues of postmodernity have gained attention. Richard Suttmeier (1994, 7) observes: "The achievement of wealth, material comforts, and political liberties on a mass scale continues to insinuate itself as a criterion for evaluating historical change, and questions as to the causal mechanisms for such achievement continue to demand answers." (See also Rabinow 1988; Najita 1993.) A parallel discourse can be seen in development studies and the social sciences, where continuing tension between developmentalism and dependency perspectives on the nature of modernization processes has led to a loss of theoretical direction. As Kate Manzo (1991, 5) puts it, there a "lack of a shared understanding of the nature of the problem."

**Issue 2: patterns of professional development.** There are concerns about the implications of patterns of professional development within Asian studies, development studies, and the social sciences—both at the level of the individual scholar as well as at the level of professional communities—for the authenticity and autonomy of research and education agendas. Part of the critique made by cultural studies, for example,

is that the research agendas in contemporary scholarship about Asia—seen especially in Asian studies and in the social sciences about Asia—reflect the political and intellectual inertia of old hegemonies within these fields more than they represent historically autonomous choices. At issue are patterns of promotion and tenure that can determine when and how a scholar makes a deeper commitment to international scholarship (Koppel and Beal 1982, 1983). During the expansion of international studies on Asia, graduate students could anticipate having choices for academic employment. By the 1980s, the situation had changed significantly. International positions at universities and colleges have become intensely competitive. This competition, in turn, has strengthened the influence of the disciplines and hence the demands they can make for allegiance. At the same time, the intense competition for very few slots has created an unusual academic marketplace in which departments frequently seek new faculty who have considerable breadth (combining disciplinary knowledge with area studies knowledge) while many young Asianists seek to establish their career niches through greater specialization. The departments (especially in the social sciences) are simply trying to maintain their disciplinary coherence. The young Asianists are divided between doing what they need to do to get tenure and doing what they believe will give them an edge in the Asian studies community if they have to devote effort to disciplinary output as well.

**Issue 3: globalization of social science education.** There is concern, too, about the consequences of the globalization of American social science education—not only for research and professional development outside the United States but also for the role of the social sciences in international education and scholarship within the United States.<sup>17</sup> Does globalization imply the confirmation of hegemonic relations

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17. These concerns are not confined to the social sciences but extend to higher education (Myerson 1994; Rubin 1994).

in international social science? Or does it simply imply a uniform pedagogy across settings (as already exists in the natural sciences and as some would desire in the social sciences)? Or does it imply a greater sensitivity to the diversity of intellectual and social contexts in which social science theory and methods are situated? Only the last option would bode well for contemporary Asian studies. For many in contemporary development studies, however, especially those wedded to rational-actor versions of economics and political science, the last option might be the most problematic.

**Issue 4: changing demographics of professional communities.** In a series of crucial articles, Frank Shulman (1983, 1984, 1992) describes key changes in the demographics of academic communities in the United States. He points out that between the 1940s and 1970s, the demographics of scholarship on Asia conducted by faculty of U.S. universities and colleges was principally American and predominantly male. By the late 1980s, a structural change was in motion: increasing numbers of foreign students were completing graduate degrees in American universities, increasing proportions of Chinese and Korean students were completing dissertations on China and Korea, and an increasing proportion was electing to stay in the United States to accept academic positions.<sup>18</sup> Michel Oksenberg, for example, points to "the addition of over a thousand émigrés from mainland China to the United States in the 1980s who have become part of the American community of contemporary China specialists" (Oksenberg 1993, 323). The vast majority of these scholars had received doctorates, not in Asian studies, but rather in disciplinary studies (NCES 1993, table 7; NCES 1994). At the same time, an increasing number of women have been added to the faculties of programs responsible for teaching

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18. These demographic changes are not exclusive to those who work on Asia. Over the last ten years, there has been a rising proportion of doctorates going to non-U.S. citizens (NCES 1993, 1994) as well as a growing proportion of foreign students who plan to stay in the United States after they complete their studies (NRC 1993).

and research about Asia.<sup>19</sup> The changing demographics of professional communities have already produced important intellectual and institutional indicators—ranging from the rise of feminist theoretical perspectives to new patterns of transpacific professional cooperation. While this demographic change is happening across fields, it is not yet clear whether the process has fundamental implications for relationships between fields—although the rise of feminist theorizing in international scholarship about Asia already suggests its impact.

**Issue 5: the funding environment.** As the diversity of major sources of financial support for studies on Asia declines, there are resurgent concerns about the relationship between the political and financial support for research about Asia and the orientation of that research. These concerns have recently flashed around the National Security Education Program (NSEP) (Heginbotham 1992; Mann 1993) and other indicators of U.S. desires to sustain its international engagement (Lake 1993; Carnegie Endowment 1994). While there has been much critical discussion of the NSEP and what is arguably an example of a traditional mode of dispensing federal funds for graduate education and faculty research in international studies, there has been much less debate about the advantages and disadvantages of *nontraditional* funding sources and their influence—such as funds from Asian governments, foundations, and corporations (Blumenstyk 1994). The programs of Japan's Center for Global Partnership, administered in the United States by the Japan Foundation, have not sparked much debate, nor has the aggressive courting of Japanese, Korean, and Taiwanese corporations, foundations, and foreign ministries by many American universities. The debate over funding is likely to

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19. This trend is not restricted to Asian studies. Since the mid-1980s, the number of women receiving doctorates in area studies has grown by 40 percent while the number going to men has grown by less than 15 percent. In 1985, some 38 percent of the 134 doctorates in area studies were granted to women; by 1991, the share going to women had risen to 43 percent (NCES 1993, appendix E).

become more pressing, however, as federal and private support for international studies continues to wane.

Together, these five issues set the context for understanding the nexus linking Asian studies, social science, and development studies—a nexus that is simultaneously (1) *institutional*, focused on competition for resources and status within the university and between the university and a range of local and national interests; (2) *social*, focused on managing increasing diversities within the professional communities as well as among the constituencies for the composition and work of those communities; and (3) *intellectual*, focused on a convergence, however controversial, around social science theories and methods. The institutional nexus is crucial because of the financial and political resources that are at stake. The social nexus is crucial because of the growing complexity of representational claims in university staffing and programming. The intellectual nexus is crucial because it is required in academe to give legitimacy to institutional and social claims for preeminence. Thus questions about theory and Asian studies are not only questions for academic musing. They are questions about the legitimacy of institutional claims for resources and for independent status within the university. They are also questions with implications for the resolution of social claims for representation and recognition from a variety of interests both inside and outside the university.

For Asian studies, the theory question today reflects the debate that has generated so much angst within Asian studies over the last two decades—namely, what are the consequences of orientalism for the authenticity of area studies generally and Asian studies in particular? This question has been widely discussed (Said 1978, 1985; JAS 1980; Cohen 1983; Clifford 1988, 255–276) and need not be reviewed here except to note one strand of the genealogy of orientalism was a denial of the relevance for Asia of disciplinary theory framed by Americans and Europeans and practiced in and on Asia. Between Asian studies and the social sciences, questions about theory are illustrated by the ongoing arguments about

universalism and particularism—especially within Asian studies—as well as by poststructuralist critiques of social science theorizing (White 1991; Doherty, Graham, and Malek 1992; Rosenau 1992; Said 1993) with implications for development studies in particular but for social science generally.

As we shall see, shifting fault lines among area studies and disciplinary studies and (more recently) development studies have created a far more volatile situation than the critique of orientalism ever implied. From a broader perspective on the political and institutional ecology of area studies, it is apparent that the discourse on orientalism speaks to only one facet of the problem: the ideological dimensions of learning *within* Asian studies.<sup>20</sup> The discourse speaks much less clearly about the ideologies for learning *about* Asia by disciplinary and development studies and their interactions with forms of learning within Asian studies. For that broader complex, the truly interesting question is whether there needs to be any theory specifically for studies about Asia (and therefore not generic to specific social science disciplines)—as a vehicle, for example, to stabilize relations across area studies, disciplinary studies, and development studies.<sup>21</sup>

There is certainly social science theory from and about Asia—or, more accurately, parts of Asia. But for the most part these theories are fundamentally of Western origin and orientation. (For Southeast Asian studies, see Doner 1991 and Keyes 1992, 15–17.) Without denying the realities of variation across Asia or even the arbitrary definitions of Asia by both Asianists and social scientists (Emmerson 1984; Dirlik 1992, 1993; Reynolds 1992; Miyoshi 1993; Andressen and Maude 1994; Palat 1994, 1995), most social scientists would still defend their disciplines as appropriate instruments for understanding Asia (or anywhere else)—allowing for various

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20. The term “ideological” is not used here in the sense of false consciousness, rather, it refers to normative justifications for distributions of power over important social resources. (See Koppel and Oasa 1987; Wuthnow 1985.)

21. There are interesting developments in the European Asian studies community on this issue, including increased conversation among “orientalists” and “occidentalists” and challenges to the reification of “Asian culture.” For an important perspective, see Lombard (1994).

imperfections of concept, method, and data. Others might be less certain, however. Sensitized by the orientalist debate and its poststructuralist legacy, they might be inclined to argue that the question of whether or not there should be "special" theory for studies about Asia should not be translated as how Asia's development experience can be squeezed into social science categories—especially given the historical and cultural background of the division of labor within contemporary American social science and between the social sciences and the humanities.

Indeed, the question of what the social sciences can or cannot say about Asia is not simply a problem involving the methodological sophistication and theoretical clarity of the contemporary social sciences. The deeper question is the bounding of the social science disciplines and the social and intellectual processes that maintain and, in effect, professionalize this bounding (Roberts and Good 1993). To properly frame the issue of how social science theories and methods about Asian development influence and are influenced by traditions of understanding in both Asian studies and development studies, it is necessary to consider the organization and ecology of internationally oriented studies in American universities.

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**THE  
CONTEMPORARY  
SITUATION**

To assess the implications of the changing intellectual relationships between area studies, development studies, and disciplinary studies about Asia, one must examine the characteristics and consequences of the contemporary institutional situation within which they contend. Six central features of the contemporary institutional context come to mind.

**UNEASY RELATIONSHIPS ARE NOTHING NEW**

Relationships in the United States among area studies, development studies, and disciplinary departments have always been uneasy. The nineteenth-century pioneers of much con-



temporary social science theory—Durkheim, Marx, and Weber—all made reference to some aspect of Asian (principally Chinese and Indian) experience in their own work, but they did so primarily to illustrate hypotheses and typological categories drawn from and directed at intellectual debates in Europe. Many of the forefathers of contemporary area studies, ranging from the chroniclers, historians, missionaries, and administrators of colonial power in Africa and Asia to the early cultural anthropologists in Africa and the Pacific, offered their authority as self-anointed interpreters of unique cultural and social patterns.<sup>22</sup> Their authority was not only presented to academic colleagues but was both financed and utilized by others with more practical interests. An example was the special programs established by the U.S. Army to train the officers and staff of occupying forces in the cultures of countries they would be administering (Fenton 1947). Frequently they used criteria strongly rooted in Western experience and standards and significantly influenced by the goals and interests of their benefactors: "Corporate interests were particularly involved in this project, and private foundations were the main underwriters of area studies programs in universities until 1958, when the U.S. federal government, shaken by the Soviet launch of the Sputnik, assumed primary responsibility" (Palat 1994, 8).

It is important here to examine the growth of development studies in relation to area and disciplinary studies. Contemporary development studies can be seen as an outgrowth of three tendencies. The first tendency is that development studies as something distinct (in intellectual and sociological terms) from disciplinary and area studies is a construct that reflects the acceptance beginning in the 1950s of development and modernization as serious academic concerns. The second tendency is the interest in applying knowledge to issues of development and modernization. This

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22. See Mungello's (1985) impressive assessment of seventeenth-century Jesuit confrontations with China and their probable implications for the evolution of European Sinology.

interest comes from several disciplines—especially anthropology, economics, political science, and sociology—and was paralleled by innovations within these disciplines as well as between them (Dobyns, Doughty, and Lasswell 1971). The third tendency is the interest in merging the location-specific insights of area studies with the comparative insights of disciplinary studies (Munck 1993). This was an attempt to construct a new composite field from area and disciplinary studies.

During the 1960s and 1970s, the attempts to synthesize development studies as a new field, extracted from area and disciplinary studies, represented an alternative discourse on transdisciplinary international scholarship. By the 1980s, and especially in the United States, these tendencies were taking some unexpected directions. First, development studies programs in many cases were basically captured by economics and international relations. This trend is reflected in the rise of programs supporting the international political and economic agendas of the Reagan and Bush administrations and the growth also of research and professional education programs in international affairs. Second, it became increasingly apparent at many universities that area studies programs had lost interest in (and had arguably lost the interest of) economics and international relations.<sup>23</sup> Third, it also became increasingly obvious that the economics professional community was discouraging economists who had interests in Asia from wandering too far outside a reference group composed of other economists and especially into reference groups composed principally of area specialists [Johnson 1988, Lambert 1990b; Amsden 1992].

One way to see the point is to review the programs of recent meetings of the Association for Asian Studies (AAS),

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23. This was not uniformly true. At institutions such as the University of California at San Diego, the University of Hawai'i, and in some ways Johns Hopkins University, initiatives in international economics and politics have been closely tied to preexisting strengths in area studies. In other cases—most notably UCLA, Stanford, Cornell, and Michigan—economics and international relations have remained core parts of area study programs and, in the case of Cornell, development studies as well.

the American Economics Association, the American Agricultural Economics Association, and the American Political Science Association. Similarly, a review of several major Asian studies journals and the key journals of the economics and political science professions reveals three points.<sup>24</sup> First, the types of papers accepted in the area studies and core disciplinary journals have become more divergent—making it less likely that someone can derive publications from a common body of research that will be acceptable to both area studies and disciplinary journals. Second, there are few examples of economists and political scientists publishing in the leading journals on both sides—especially if they are untenured. Third, when crossover publication does occur it is more likely to involve country-specific journals on the area studies side—*China Quarterly*, for example, or *Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies*—than regionally oriented journals such as *The Journal of Asian Studies*. All this is a departure from the situation in the 1950s and 1960s, when crossover, particularly with economics and international relations, was much more common (especially in relation to Indochina).<sup>25</sup>

Another way to illustrate these outcomes is to examine the changing contents of the journal *Economic Development and Cultural Change*. Based at the University of Chicago where it was started by Bert Hoselitz and initially committed to encouraging a composite construction of knowledge based on area, development, and disciplinary studies, *Economic Development and Cultural Change* in recent years has become more narrowly oriented to development economics. The journal *World Development*, increasingly an alternative candidate for the task originally undertaken by

24. These key journals are: *The American Journal of Agricultural Economics*, *The American Political Science Review*, and *The American Economic Review*.

25. By comparison, it is more common to see crossover between the AAS meetings and participation in meetings of the American Anthropology Association and the American Historical Society. One point this reflects is that today, within many political science departments, international relations has taken a strong turn in the direction of quantitative methodologies. Such departments are unlikely to even hire area-based international relations specialists.

*Economic Development and Cultural Change*, is doing better at maintaining disciplinary balance—in part by placing greater emphasis on policy and problems than on narrow disciplinary agendas. *Development and Change*, published by the Institute of Social Studies at the Hague, is a European example of an effort to pursue the original composite. It too focuses on both problems and policies but with a distinct preference for critical (Marxist sociology and anthropology) rather than liberal (neoclassical economics) social science. *World Politics*, although not normally associated with development studies, has in fact shown notable evidence of broadening its concerns beyond international relations as a derivative of political science to international and comparative perspectives on issues in development studies.<sup>26</sup>

The capture of several development studies programs in the United States by economics and international relations in the 1980s is not altogether surprising given wider trends in the American political economy. The practical effect was to cloud the vision of development studies as a transdisciplinary composite that had been emerging since the 1950s and to impose a “policy-oriented” version of the vocabulary of economic theory and methods, tempered in some cases by the concerns of international political and security relations.<sup>27</sup>

The interests of development studies as a professional community, however, do remain somewhat distinct from economics and international relations as academic disci-

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26. The contents of a journal are admittedly an imperfect measure of the conceptual mainstream of a professional community. But when the journal uses external reviews seriously and when its editorial decisions are held to some additional accountability—for example, by the professional association or institution that sponsors the journal—then its changing orientations are not a completely autonomous development.

27. It can also be argued that while development studies evolved principally to address issues of modernization in the Third World, contemporary international studies in most cases are very much a First World endeavor. Although this characterization is accurate in some instances, in fact both sides have been influenced by processes of globalization generally and the diffusion of liberal economic regimes in particular.

plines. This is a result not only of differences in emphasis on policy assessment in development studies and theory and methodological refinement in mainstream economics and international relations. It is a result as well of the proximity of contemporary development studies about Asia to significant funding and influence from major international development actors: the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the United Nations Development Program, the Asian Development Bank, and others. Together these agencies employ thousands of people engaged in international economic development studies—including graduates of development studies programs—and provide significant funding for research and consultancy by university-based economists and others. International relations specialists would appear to be riding coattails in this instance. Yet they too have been the beneficiaries of a renewed interest in political and security issues by several foundations (such as Carnegie, Ford, and MacArthur) and, especially in the Washington area, by the role of Korean and Taiwanese funds in financing development studies on Asia with a political and security focus.

These trends continued into the 1990s with the emergence of interdepartmental committees and programs for development studies on such issues as the environment, AIDS, democratization, gender relations, and security. In several cases, these programs and committees are evidence for the emergence of a compromise organizational model between the multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary programs of the 1970s and 1980s and the traditional discipline departments. In this formative model, there are umbrella organizations that usually report to someone in central administration. In several cases, what is emerging is built on the remains of older initiatives in area studies, Fulbright programs, other activities for international educational and scholarly exchange, and even ethnic studies. International Studies and Overseas Programs (ISOP) at UCLA is an example. Other examples can be found at Berkeley, the University of Southern California, the University of California at San Diego, and the University of Pittsburgh.

## IS THE UNIVERSITY UBIQUITOUS?

While development studies programs—especially those with strong economic interests—have occasionally found a home in “stand-alone” settings outside the formal suzerainty of a university, the major venue for the recent growth of both development studies and area studies has been the university. This means that for both development studies and area studies, patterns of paradigm growth, as well as professional organization and mobility, have evolved under the rules governing the practice of knowledge production specifically in universities. This has meant, in turn, a continuing pressure (both intellectually and sociologically) to conform to the primacy of disciplinary canons. For example, while several publications can be identified as development studies journals (such as *World Development*) or area studies journals (such as *The Journal of Asian Studies*), most of their contributors are now based in disciplinary departments rather than in area studies or development studies programs.

As noted earlier, considerations of promotion and tenure have important consequences for professional commitment to either development studies or area studies as fields distinct from disciplinary studies. This is a relationship that is well understood by young Ph.D.s who are just beginning their academic careers—especially in universities and colleges where major area studies or development studies programs are not well established in terms of FTE positions, teaching and research assistantships, travel and research funds, and political support from deans and department chairs (Koppel and Beal 1982, 1983). As described by Carter Findley (1992, B3): “A normal university department benefits from higher status, having a chair to represent it to the dean, its own faculty positions, and a significant budget. In contrast, a center normally has no permanent faculty positions, a minimal budget, and a directorship that may not be seen as a desirable position for a faculty member.”

Where stronger programs do exist, there is no guaran-

tee of an easier relationship. For instance, in how many cases are the deans of interdisciplinary programs invited to write letters for the files of department-based faculty who have some affiliation with the programs? And even where programs are not especially strong, the nature of the issue cannot always be predicted. For instance, among the 42 centers designated as Title VI National Resource Centers and FLAS programs (for the 1991–93 cycle), as well as the 90-odd centers not receiving such endorsements, in several cases access to continued program funding—from Title VI, from university and college resources, from corporations and foundations—comes down to the activities of one faculty slot. A person recruited under such circumstances may find compelling incentives to maintain a clear international focus. Even so, there still will be pressures from the discipline departments to conform as well to their own standards of excellence. This will happen even in the state universities, where increasing pressure to demonstrate the utility of public investment in postsecondary education, especially in the social sciences and humanities, is raising questions about excessive reliance on refereed journal articles and university press books as measures of utility. Nevertheless, as Benedict Anderson (1992, 31) puts it, “there is no ‘natural’ fit between the institutional and intellectual logic of modern American universities and area studies, nor I think, will there ever be.”<sup>28</sup>

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28. This incongruity can lead to expectations that are breathtaking in scope. Consider the following example for a faculty position in Asian studies: “Anticipated tenure-track assistant professor of Liberal Arts and International Studies beginning August 1995. The successful candidate will teach courses on: Asian development, including the role of natural resources and environmental policy in development strategies; sustainable development; international political economy of Asia Pacific; the politics of ethnicity in development; and Asian culture. Research focus on natural resource producing ASEAN countries and interstate relations with the U.S.; research interest in working with engineering and applied science programs. As a full-time faculty member in LAIS, the successful candidate will be expected to contribute to teaching in his/her area plus more general fields; individual research; university and professional service; extramural fund raising; and cross-disciplinary research activities in a science and engineering context.”

Two important points are usually left out of such assessments, however. First, there are the implications of organizational and intellectual segmentation within the Asian studies community itself. Left to their own devices, there would be no Asian studies programs as such at any university or college—just collections of often competing subregional programs on South Asia, Southeast Asia, and East Asia and possibly country-specific programs on China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, and Vietnam. This pattern of fragmented growth is precisely what happened during the expansion of interests in Asian studies during the 1960s and 1970s. The reverse trend of consolidation that has been unfolding over the last decade has not been the product of a reconciliation movement from within these subregional and country programs; rather, it has generally been imposed on these programs by university authorities over recalcitrant subregional and country programs.

These days one is not surprised to see advertisements for administrative positions (often with a departmental base) to “coordinate” established area study centers for the purposes of encouraging “examination of issues and approaches that cut across geographical divisions” (ASN 1992, 36). In most cases, unfortunately, the motivations for these steps can be found in the requirements of financial retrenchment and the politics associated with administrative and disciplinary resentment at the proliferation of deans and directors of Asian (and other area) studies programs on campus. Consequently, little attention has been directed at a prime cause of the segmentation in Asian studies: the delicate status of cross-cultural research *within* Asian studies. As several observers have noted, the trend within Asian studies has been toward greater specialization in local areas, countries, or subregions (Lambert 1985). Not accidentally, it is this domain—comparative studies—that development studies has attempted to appropriate as a strength, but often through reliance on the application of economic and historical universals.

The second point is that while the university is ubiquitous as an institutional arena for area studies, development



studies, and disciplinary studies, it is not the exclusive domain for the people educated by these communities. A telling point has been documented for some time (Berryman et al. 1979; Koppel and Beal 1982, 1983; McDonnell 1983): most graduate students who specialize in scholarship about Asia do not go on to conventional academic careers. Instead, they are employed in a variety of nonacademic settings (banks, investment firms, legal firms, international corporations) with interests in Asia. As their numbers grow, there is increasing tension between the professional community in the university and the less well formed and certainly more heterogeneous version of the professional community outside academe. An assessment of the career goals of FLAS awardees, for example, arguably the core group in any assessment of the community of scholarship about Asia, demonstrates that even here the commitment to a career in higher education is not uniform across subfields and is lower overall than might be expected. Of those who received FLAS awards during the period 1988–91, some 60 percent had academic career goals—ranging from a high of 79 percent among those specializing in East and South Asia to 56 percent for those specializing in Southeast Asia to 35 percent for those specializing in international studies (CIE 1994, table 4).

In this context, the growing influence of policy-oriented research organizations and policy forums outside the university is an important development. Examples include the Brookings Institution, the Heritage Foundation, the American Enterprise Institute, the Center for Strategic and International Studies, the Asia Foundation, the Asia Society, and the Wilson Center. In most cases, such organizations are not new. But in recent years it has become clear that they can no longer be viewed simply as extensions of the university and college Asian studies infrastructure. While the university can lay claim to alumni loyalties, these institutions may be better positioned to lay claim to the professional interests of the nonacademic professional community. The lines of this problem can be seen at the professional academic meetings, where those nonacademics who do attend usually find themselves

talking to each other.<sup>29</sup> Consequently, while the university is ubiquitous for debates over priorities in fields of scholarship about Asia, it is not ubiquitous for assessing policy competence in those fields.

#### CONFLICT OVER RESOURCES

From the 1950s through the mid-1970s, the major area studies programs that focused on Asia in a few American universities received considerable support from major foundations (Carnegie, Ford, Rockefeller) and later in several cases (Cornell, Michigan State, Wisconsin) from foreign aid (USAID and the World Bank) and defense-oriented federal sources. In fact, by the 1960s, foreign aid sources of support for Asian studies at land-grant universities significantly exceeded the funding available from traditional foundation sources, although these funds were concentrated on only a few land-grant universities. Development studies programs were for the most part supported by the same sources as their parent social science disciplines.

By the 1980s, the pattern was more complex, reflecting important changes in the U.S. political economy. Major area studies programs—originally receiving their external support from private foundations—were having to fall back once again on those foundations and also on state government support as access to federal and foreign aid sources declined.<sup>30</sup> But for

29. Although numbers of nonacademics attend the annual meetings of the Association for Asian Studies, for example, their principal points of connection at the meetings are each other and their alumni networks. This pattern varies across the countries and subregions of contemporary Asian studies: there is a higher probability of academic/nonacademic discourse in China studies and a considerably lower probability for South and Southeast Asia.

30. During the 1970s there was some "democratization" of access to USAID funds, essentially through provisions governing the allocation of funds under Title XII of the Foreign Assistance Act. This new policy permitted numerous universities—especially many land-grant universities—who had not been strong players in international studies to get deeper into the "game." By the 1980s, however, dissatisfaction with this contracting earmark by USAID and by private consultant groups that had lost ground led to a reduction of such university contracting. By the mid-1980s, as USAID funds for Asia declined, the outlook for university contracting was dim indeed. Several major universities are involved in interna-

most of these foundations, the Asian region was a declining international priority while Japan and other areas (Africa and Eastern Europe) and issues (global environmental management, AIDS, economic reform) were ascendant. As a result, independent Asian studies programs began to disappear.

Development studies programs were tapping traditional foundation sources—which were increasingly interested in influencing the agenda of development studies—as well as federal defense and foreign aid sources, particularly as research focused increasingly on *international economic and political relations*. Nonstrategic development studies continued to rely on sources that supported the agendas of the constituent disciplines. By the late 1980s, however, funding earmarked for research on Asia was a diminishing resource.<sup>31</sup>

#### OLD ARGUMENTS AND NEW DISCOURSES

Old arguments about the relative merits of disciplinary and interdisciplinary research for international studies and about the relationships between applied and basic research are taking new forms. These new forms have important implications for basic institutional realities that have long characterized disciplinary, area, and development studies.

In some of the social sciences where applied work (not simply fieldwork) on international development is most likely (agricultural economics, anthropology, geography, rural sociology, urban and regional planning), there is a tendency for professional development to occur in the potentially interdisciplinary context of problem-oriented research. Such con-

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tional development consortia (such as the midwestern land-grant universities in the Midwest University Consortium for International Agricultural Development and the western land-grant universities in the Consortium for International Development) originally formed to bid on and implement USAID contracts. Today they have had to diversify to other foreign aid sources as well as lobby to protect USAID's congressional appropriation.

31. For several decades, students in Asian studies and development studies could tap the USAID funding made available to international agricultural development programs at land-grant universities (such as Cornell, Michigan State, and Wisconsin) and through consortia of such universities. By the early 1990s, this funding (most notably Title XII funding) had essentially disappeared.

texts include the collaborative research support programs (CRSPs) for agricultural development undertaken by land-grant universities networked under Title XII support from USAID as well as various development projects undertaken by university-based urban, rural, and regional studies programs and supported by USAID and multilateral donors. Many of the development assistance agencies have reduced their support—especially for U.S. university contracts—in recent years. At the same time, presumably in response to shifting agendas and new opportunities for foundation funding, there has been a proliferation of transdisciplinary (and transregional) committees and programs focused on contemporary international development issues such as global environment, AIDS, democratization, and gender relations.

Although problem-oriented contexts do not necessarily legitimate interdisciplinary work on international issues, they can make such work more plausible (Brown and Ranney 1991). Indeed, the question of legitimacy is a point of contention—as can be seen in the bifurcation within international studies between basic and applied research. This bifurcation is reflected in divergent paths of professional development—between traditional academic careers and various degrees of orientation to problem-oriented, policy-oriented, and applied careers—not only within development studies and also within the social science disciplines. Although the split is much less likely to occur within contemporary Asian studies, the immunity of Asian studies is recent and does not signify the achievement of balance between an academically driven agenda and an orientation to problem solving. In the last two decades, Asian studies has consistently shied away from the explicit policy interests that motivated most of its founders.

The juxtaposition of the disciplinary/interdisciplinary debate in international studies with the basic/applied distinction is important for understanding the evolution of development studies. As noted earlier, development studies arose, in part, as a response to interests in applying social science to problems of modernization—applied interests that

certain social science disciplines in university settings were not prepared to acknowledge as serious research. Moreover, development studies has itself become the staging ground for a growing challenge to all forms of international studies—participatory action research (PAR). In an evolution with consequences that may ultimately parallel those that followed from the cultural critique of modernization orientations within area studies, participatory action research represents a political as well as intellectual challenge to development studies, area studies, and disciplinary studies. (See Escobar 1984, 1995; Fals-Borda 1988; Edwards 1989; Nencel and Pels 1991; Stoecker and Bonacich 1992; Greenwood, Whyte, and Harkavy 1993; Cernea 1993; Bentley 1994.) As Kate Manzo observes:

Central to PAR philosophy is the question of how to generate popular power (rather than economic growth) so that people may gain control over the forces that shape their lives. PAR projects combine techniques of adult education, social science research, and political activism. At root is a rejection of abstract "top down" development plans which attempt to universalize the Western experience; an engagement of local grass roots initiatives; and stress on the need for economic processes that are both rooted in the needs of specific communities and appropriate for local ecosystems. Emphasis is placed on grass roots inquiry into what development means to poor and disenfranchised people in "developing" areas (Manzo 1991, 28).

Although participatory action research constitutes a formative professional community from within development studies, this community includes nonacademics (such as community organizers) as the peer community and not simply as "subjects" or "users." Consequently, participatory action research is not completely university-based and hence is not entirely subject to the rules and constraints of the university discourse (Bartunek 1993; Cancian 1993).

The status of participatory action research cannot be assessed independently of the broader relationships between international studies and its support system, however. For example, participatory action research has benefited from the

disillusionment of several funding and political quarters—the foreign aid agencies, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and other key parties in applied development—with respect to the limited and unsatisfactory applied results from disciplinary development studies programs based in universities. Participatory action research has also benefited from growing enthusiasm for the promising developmental results associated with action-oriented groups such as NGOs and, beyond that, from the growing enthusiasm for “private” as opposed to “public” initiatives in development (Islam, Morse, and Soesastro 1984; Bajracharya, Morse, and Pongsapich 1987; Cernea 1991; Whyte 1991).

Whether the PAR challenge is simply a threat to displace other forms of applied international studies or whether—by providing a way for the subaltern to be identified and later empowered—it also represents an alternative discourse on disciplinary/interdisciplinary and universalistic/particularistic issues is not yet completely clear. There is, for example, discernible tension in participatory action research between the claimed validation of indigenous knowledge categories (about power and justice, for example) and a sometimes ideological insistence on the priority of certain learning processes and outcomes (such as democratic choices and recognition of women’s rights). The PAR agenda, in effect, not only empowers local knowledge—a potentially significant intellectual challenge to the representational claims of disciplinary, development, and area studies—but it also challenges the credentialism at the heart of membership in university-based discourse.<sup>32</sup> This is a crucial point, because it expands the boundary-crossing issues that lie at the heart of conventional

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32. It might be argued that ethnographic research relies heavily on “discovering” local knowledge and belief systems, but the PAR critique is dubious about the appropriation of knowledge that is implicit in traditional ethnographic research methods (Bajracharya, Morse, and Pongsapich 1987; Crocker 1989). Although it is not clear what the participatory action research position would be on the best examples of historical ethnography (Ileto 1979; Rafael 1988), this has been a pre-occupation of the cultural studies perspective.

contention among university-based international studies. The expansion reaches beyond international studies to ethnic studies and spreads beyond the university to community groups and other development actors (Bajracharya, Morse, and Pongsapich 1987; Cancian 1993).

There is another type of new discourse, as well, the influence of which is only just beginning to be seen. This is the growth of the Internet. There has been an explosion of list-serve groups, newsgroups, forums, and just plain e-mail traffic on a wide range of topics related to Asia. A key aspect of this new wave of communication is the lack of hierarchy and credentialism in participation as well as its increasingly global nature. This openness will undoubtedly be influenced by current efforts in academic circles to resolve how Internet materials can be cited and in what sense on-line journals are "refereed." It remains to be seen how all this will affect the traditional modes of organizing discourse, but it is already clear that a broad change is under way in patterns of professional communication—and these patterns are likely to have a major impact on traditional modes of discourse.

#### THE DISARTICULATION CRISIS

In the United States today, internationally oriented research—in development studies and area studies alike—is in a crisis that reflects the disarticulation of the political and financial support systems for scholarship about Asia. This disarticulation has two principal features. First, many in the Asian studies and development studies community have treated the convergence of research agendas with national political and strategic interests and the assurance of federal funding as a given. In fact, this assumption has been suspect for at least two decades. While the U.S. economy has indeed become more engaged with Asia over the last two decades, federal financial support for America's intellectual capital on Asia has been declining in real terms. Second, the process of disarticulation has been highly uneven and affects different fields

and subfields in different ways. While overall financial support has been declining in real terms, the allocation of funds has shifted around at different times.

Thus a crisis of disarticulation characterizes the relationships among international studies on Asia and key elements of the political and financial support for that scholarship. The substance of the crisis is not that the disarticulation is recent or uniform, however, but that recognition of its consequences is only just beginning to dawn. One sign is the continuing segmentation within the Asian studies community even as overall financial support appears endangered. Once again, Benedict Anderson offers a good example:

In the specific case of Southeast Asian studies, the relative unimportance of the region's ten countries to the United States has made implausible the kinds of "policy" legitimations that more or less work for China or Japan studies. China specialists and scholars of Japan may end as ambassadors to these countries, or as assistant secretaries of state for East Asian Affairs. Nothing comparable awaits the student in Burma or Malaysia (Anderson 1992, 31).

A second indicator for Asian studies is the complex influence of changes in American policy perceptions of Asia and what was therefore expected of academic research. Referring again to China, Michel Oksenberg illustrates this issue:

The American study of contemporary China since the 1940s has been greatly influenced by international affairs and domestic developments in both China and the United States. The McCarthy era of the early 1950s, the Sino-Soviet alliance of the 1950s and split of the 1960s, the Vietnam War, the Sino-American rapprochement of the 1970s, Deng's reforms of the 1980s, and the suppression of popular demonstrations in 1989 all significantly affected funding, research opportunities, the research agenda, and recruitment of new people into Chinese studies (Oksenberg 1993, 322).

There are currently 131 centers, programs, and committees for Asian (or subregional or country-specific) studies



based at American universities and colleges. Most of these have never been independent (in terms of staffing or status within the university), but rather are set within disciplinary departments. During the last ten years, however, in universities and colleges with more substantial histories of Asian studies programming, the number of independent Asian studies programs—programs with full-time staff, distinct budget resources, and independently listed courses—has been declining and the model of the Asian studies program as a purely administrative entity, possibly with claims on shares of a small number of departmental appointments, has regained the upper hand. In several universities, the proliferation of country-specific area study programs—of whatever form—has been reversed and reconsolidated into regional or international programs.

The number of dissertations by American university graduate students in certain geographic and cultural areas (South and Southeast Asia, for example) appears to be declining. This decline may sometimes be an indication of declining interest in those areas. (For South Asia see Lambert 1985 and NCFLIS 1992.) The evidence is mixed. For Fulbright-Hays dissertation awards, for example, the number of applicants for awards for research in East, Southeast, and South Asia all increased from 1984–85 to 1994–95. But considered as shares of all applications and awards, there were differences. The share of applications for East Asia increased from 16.9 percent to 18.2 percent, while the shares for South and Southeast Asia rose marginally. For dissertation awards, however, East Asia declined as a share of all awards from 17.2 percent to 13.6 percent while Southeast Asia (8.1 percent to 12.1 percent) and South Asia (12.7 percent to 15 percent) increased.<sup>33</sup>

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33. There is no single annual compilation of financial support for international dissertation research. Comprehensive data on dissertations about Asia are notably insufficient despite heroic efforts by Frank Shulman and others. One problem is that as the universe of social science dissertations on Asia moves further beyond the normal gaze of Asian studies programs, reporting and discovery become problematic.

All this has to be seen in a context of stagnating levels of overall support earmarked for dissertation research in Asia relative to the demand. That point is illustrated in Table 2, which summarizes Fulbright dissertation awards for Asia. Of course, there are other sources of support—both from the government (National Endowment for the Humanities, National Security Education Program, National Science Foundation, U.S. Department of Agriculture, USAID, USIA) and from private foundations (American Council of Learned Societies, Ford, International Research and Exchanges Board, MacArthur, Mellon, Social Science Research Council, Wenner-Gren)—but these often vary considerably in terms of subregional and country focus, thematic priorities, disciplinary preference, and levels of support. For graduate students at the dissertation stage in Asian studies trying to match their interests to sources of funding, the environment presents great uncertainty: Can support be found? For what topics? With what implications for the time needed to complete the degree? With what consequences for the problem of financing prolonged education and deferring entering the job market?<sup>34</sup>

As Tables 2 and 3 indicate, two of the classic federal sources—the Fulbright student program and the Fulbright-Hays program—have not been able to keep pace with the demand. While these programs were not intended to be the only source, they have been a key element of the U.S. international dissertation financing system. As can be seen in

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34. This discussion assumes that dissertations are important not simply as indicators of doctoral studies completions, but also are crucial in advancing fields intellectually. A recent article on the roles of dissertations in sociological research concludes that “doctoral dissertations are having a declining influence on sociological research” as measured by how often dissertations are cited in published sociological research (Wright and Soma 1995, 8). Comparable assessments have not been done for Asian studies, but I believe the result in that case (as well as in the case of sociology) might actually be different. While dissertations might not be frequently cited, a significant share of new academic articles and books in any year are the direct products of dissertation research. Postdoctoral programs that offer support for converting dissertations into books and articles attract keen competition.

Tables 3 and 4, the erosion of the Fulbright-Hays program in particular is serious because it was conceived as a major pillar for international dissertation research. Moreover, as Table 3 also demonstrates, the costs of dissertation research in many areas have increased to levels that can seriously strain both donor and student resources.

There are difficult choices ahead for the financing system. Should funders try to spread their limited resources thinly across the largest number or should they concentrate resources on only the very best? Should they continue following a "market" orientation in the distribution of awards across countries and subregions or should they try to redress imbalances (such as the continuing underemphasis on South and Southeast Asia)? Should they continue following (as some programs do) a "market" mechanism in terms of research topics or should they assume a more proactive position with regard to themes and issues?<sup>35</sup> Because of the meager efforts to pool funding and grant competitions as well as the understandable desire of different programs, both public and private, to maintain their program identities (and the thematic priorities and review processes and criteria involved)—these issues have still not been addressed systematically.

Finally, there is continuing evidence that an Asian studies background is not an asset for entry into most academic social science faculty slots (with the possible exception of disciplinary specializations on China and Japan). Area studies in the United States flourished during the Cold War because U.S. universities placed a premium on building their capacity to understand other places—especially places where the United States had clear strategic interests. During the Vietnam War, this same motivation made Southeast Asia and Indochina area studies programs in U.S. universities flashpoints for supporters and opponents alike. After the war, several of the Vietnam and Indochina programs declined. As

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35. The third point cannot be drawn from Tables 1 to 4 but can be seen in Shulman's work and in the *Survey of Earned Doctorates* periodically organized by the National Center for Education Statistics.

Table 2. Fulbright Program: U.S. student program statistics, 1964-94

Region/ country	1964-86		1990-91			1991-	
	Grants	Grants	Alter- nates	Re- jected	Total	Grants	Alter- nates
East Asia	442	39	19	136	194	46	42
China	0	0	0	2	2	0	0
Hong Kong	22	5	2	10	17	6	5
Japan	274	19	10	89	118	22	27
Korea	24	9	5	11	25	10	5
Taiwan	122	6	2	24	32	8	5
Share of Asia total (%)	49.50	60.94				56.79	
Southeast Asia	177	11	29	28	68	18	25
Indonesia	83	1	12	7	20	6	4
Malaysia	23	1	3	3	7	1	5
Philippines	17	4	5	5	14	2	5
Singapore	2	2	4	4	10	5	3
Thailand	52	3	5	9	17	4	8
Share of Asia total (%)	19.82	17.18				22.22	
South Asia	274	14	18	52	84	17	11
Bangladesh	4	1	2	0	3	2	1
India	220	7	13	47	67	7	9
Nepal	22	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pakistan	20	2	1	2	5	3	0
Sri Lanka	8	4	2	3	9	5	1
Share of Asia total (%)	30.68	21.88				20.99	
Asia total	893	64	66	216	346	81	78
%		18.50	19.08	62.43		20.77	20.00

Source: Institute of International Education, U.S. Student Programs Division, *U.S. Student Program Statistics, 1990-1991, 1991-1992, 1992-1993, 1993-1994*; Board of Foreign Scholarships, *Forty Years: The Fulbright Program 1946-1986* (Washington: 1986).

92		1992-93				1993-94			
Re-jected	Total	Grants	Alter-nates	Re-jected	Total	Grants	Alter-nates	Re-jected	Total
135	223	51	54	159	264	61	45	145	251
2	2	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
10	21	7	5	14	26	8	2	10	20
78	127	23	23	78	124	22	26	74	122
15	30	18	17	31	66	23	15	28	66
30	43	3	9	35	47	8	2	33	43
		45.13				48.41			
47	90	29	13	57	99	30	23	25	78
17	27	5	7	13	25	8	6	8	22
2	8	4	1	5	10	1	3	2	6
6	13	9	0	10	19	8	8	2	18
2	10	6	0	6	12	7	3	4	14
20	32	5	5	23	33	6	3	9	18
		25.66				23.81			
49	77	33	15	45	93	35	38	48	121
0	3	4	0	1	5	5	0	1	6
41	57	13	11	34	58	12	28	40	80
0	0	5	0	6	11	7	8	5	20
2	5	7	3	1	11	3	0	0	3
6	12	4	1	3	8	8	2	2	12
		29.20				27.78			
231	390	113	82	261	456	126	106	218	450
59.23		24.78	17.98	57.24		28.00	23.56	48.44	

Table 3. Fulbright-Hays Fellowships: Distribution in the Asia-Pacific region and average cost,

Region/country	1984-85	1985-86	1986-87	1987-88
<b>East Asia</b>				
China	1	6	5	5
Hong Kong		1	1	
Japan	14	13	10	11
Korea	1	1	1	
Taiwan	3	3	4	
Total number	19	24	21	16
Unit cost (\$)	19,020	18,508	21,287	24,207
<b>Southeast Asia/Pacific</b>				
Australia				2
Burma			1	
Federated States of Micronesia			1	
Fiji	1			
French Polynesia				1
Indonesia	4	7	5	3
Laos				
Malaysia	1		1	
New Zealand				
Papua New Guinea	1	1	1	1
Philippines		1		2
Singapore				
Thailand	2	1	2	2
Vanuatu			1	
Vietnam				
Western Samoa				
Total number	9	10	12	11
Unit cost (\$)	16,755	16,461	16,347	18,459
<b>South Asia</b>				
Bangladesh	1	1		
India	11	4	10	11
Nepal	1	3	3	2
Pakistan	1	3		
Sri Lanka		1	1	
Total number	14	12	14	13
Unit cost (\$)	16,935	14,310	7,681	11,532
Unit cost (Rupees)			118,329	97,614

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Center for International Education (unpublished data).

1984-85 to 1994-95

1988-89	1989-90	1990-91	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95
5	5	3	3	5	2	3
10	7	7	6	6	3	5
	1		1		2	1
15	13	10	10	11	7	9
32,620	29,846	31,608	30,440	34,892	38,274	45,607
6	3	5	1	6	4	3
			1			
		1	1	1	1	
1	1		1	1	1	1
2			1			1
1	4	1	3			3
					1	
11	8	7	8	8	8	8
15,815	17,896	23,559	22,590	19,653	25,638	21,072
7	9	10	12	7	7	2
5	2	3	2	1		2
				2		
1	1		1		1	
13	12	13	15	10	8	4
7,693	9,537	7,155	8,522	11,661	12,391	15,980
101,717	113,788	163,178	190,196	293,107	309,170	160,532

**Table 4. Fulbright-Hays Fellowships: Applications and awards, 1984-85 to 1994-95**

	1984-85	1985-86	1986-87	1987-88	1988-89	1989-90	1990-91	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95
<b>Applications received</b>											
East Asia	58	56	61	59	60	75	71	99	89	96	109
Southeast Asia	27	31	26	31	29	37	32	46	37	35	46
South Asia	30	31	29	30	29	31	40	37	37	46	54
<b>Success ratio (%)</b>											
East Asia	32.8	42.9	34.4	27.1	25	17.3	14.1	10.1	12.4	7.3	8.3
Southeast Asia	33.3	32.3	46.2	38.7	37.9	21.6	21.9	21.7	21.6	22.9	17.4
South Asia	46.7	38.7	48.3	43.3	44.8	38.7	32.5	40.5	27	17.4	18.5

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Center for International Education (unpublished data).



East-West tensions diminished in the late 1980s, the political rationale for public support of most "developing country" area programs waned also.

#### THE THEORY IMPASSE

There are reasons enough to speak of a crisis in international research given the fundamental changes in the political and financial environment for such research, but there are powerful reasons from within international research itself. As we have seen, the conception of development studies as a new composite field of inquiry that can integrate area and disciplinary studies and address questions of knowledge application has come into serious question. Development studies is at an impasse created by the apparent exhaustion of major intellectual themes and arguments in the face of continuing exposure to complexity and variation. Broadly speaking, there is a neo-Marxist/liberal economic axis along which specific perspectives on these transformation instruments are aligned in contemporary development studies (primarily anthropology, sociology, economics, and political science). Yet the debate generated by that alignment is at an impasse. (See Laclau 1977; Booth 1985; Burawoy 1984; Eder 1982; Hart 1986a, 1986b; Perkins 1983; Rosen 1985; Koppel and Hawkins 1994; Koppel and James 1994; Feldman 1994, 101-105.) The major features of this impasse, as well as its institutional consequences, are not confined to development studies alone, however.

The theory problem for both development studies and area studies on Asia is not simply that there are competing ways of conceiving the nature of development processes. Rather, weaving through all the major conceptions are tensions between different scales (macro/micro) and different forms of explanation (universalism/particularism), as well as continuing arguments over the imperatives of structure, culture, and history. These tensions are reflected in four major problems: the use of metaphors and analogies; the focus on change as discontinuity; the problems of comprehending

heterogeneity of context; and difficulties in relating broad processes of social transformation to explanations of human action.

### **Metaphors and Analogies**

There are serious problems in the use of metaphors and analogies which deny the variation that exists and which also impose understandings that serve both theoretical and political ends (Gudeman 1986; Corwin 1987; Koppel and Oasa 1987). For example, rural households throughout Asia appear to be involved in several economies: rural/urban, formal/informal, agrarian/nonfarm, and so forth. The household's division of labor (by gender, age, birth order, and so on) appears to vary significantly even within communities. Markets display wide variety in forms of segmentation based on economic, ethnic, political, spatial, and commodity forces. A maze of quasi-categories arise from neo-Marxists, liberal economists, and strongly functionalist forms of anthropology and sociology. These quasi-categories are a recognition of content that lies outside the boundaries of existing metaphors and a recognition, too, of metaphors with boundaries that are inconsistent with patterns suggested by observed relationships.

The metaphor of the household, for example, is a metaphor for a stable social unit within which labor allocation, socialization, and other processes occur. Both area studies and development studies routinely speak of household reproduction as a key element of rural class development and focus on issues in social reproductive processes. But they rarely ask (if only to avoid tautological traps in hypotheses about reproduction): Are there processes of social differentiation in parts of rural Asia that do not yield social formations corresponding to the household metaphor? Is the household what we think it is? Whether from the left (in terms of perspectives on the household in the context of semiproletarianization) or from the right (in terms of expansion of market principles of exchange and resource alloca-

tion), there is a disturbing common tendency: having identified the context and the guiding dynamics, household characteristics and behavior are primarily *deduced*. Variation is lost to the imperative of the metaphor.

The imperative of the metaphor can have political as well as intellectual purposes. Characteristics of agricultural/nonagricultural relationships are an important perspective from which to understand broad patterns of socioeconomic change. But development studies about Asia have perpetuated an ideological interpretation of these links that emphasizes the importance of postwar agrarian reforms—promoted by the United States—in Japan, Korea, and Taiwan. The argument for the decisive role of the reforms has been elevated to the status of a metaphor for the validity of reformist rather than revolutionary change. The metaphor has served important legitimacy roles in support of postwar political evolution in Japan, Korea, and Taiwan as well as enshrining the fundamental value of the U.S. role in that process. At the same time, the perpetuation of the metaphor has impeded recognition of the need for more careful assessments of the political significance of variation in agricultural/nonagricultural relationships in these three countries (Koppel 1993; Lee 1993).

The problem is that rigid acceptance of metaphors and analogies dulls sensitivity to those occasions when such understandings are inappropriate (Friedman 1988; Amsden 1994). This happens when the predominant metaphors and analogies focus attention on what are fundamentally morphological attributes—such as different forms of the employment relationship—when in fact attention should focus on the content of the relationships. A morphological focus assumes that the form is the content (the Marxist position that wage labor is proletarianization, for example) or that the form is determined by the content (the functionalist position on material determinants of agrarian institutions, for example). What is needed are metaphors and analogies that support a direct understanding of processes by which resources and

labor are mobilized and how these processes are shaped by and act upon larger structures of economic and political power.

Faced with such anomalies, it is not surprising that the focus in development and disciplinary studies about Asia has shifted strongly to empiricist issues such as data reliability. The pursuit of such issues has led to increasingly sophisticated methods, but it has also invited criticism that discussions about methodology problems divert attention from basic assumptions about what data are, how they can be known, and who "owns" the data (Crocker 1989; Contreras 1991). Thus it is appropriate to ask: at what point should there be more active assessment of the array of metaphors and analogies?<sup>36</sup> The question not only concerns development studies and disciplinary studies. It is also at the heart of the cultural critique of area studies.

#### **Change as Discontinuity**

There is a strong tendency to conceive the impact and characteristics of social processes as composed of a few significant discontinuities—from family to wage labor, from peasant to market production, from human to mechanized labor, from rural to urban sociocultural organization. Theoretical understanding is not oriented to understanding social process as much as it is to describing the social location of processes in terms of a theory's map of stages and categories. The results, which often amount to reductionist arguments about the

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36. This discussion has focused on an interesting example: what happens when metaphors fail to explain socioeconomic change in rural areas? Yet there are numerous other examples that should be considered. There is the persistence of the rational actor model, for example, especially in economics and political science. The influence of this model on political science in particular is coming under challenge (Johnson and Keehn 1994; Green and Shapiro 1994). Then there is the problematic status of metaphors, also used principally in economics and political science, which portray clearly distinguishable "public" and "private" interests that, in turn, are related to collective versus individual interests. For example, several recent assessments of economic development and government-economy issues in Japan, Korea, and Taiwan are beginning to challenge the classical public/private orthodoxy (Boling 1990). The problem is whether this revisionism is a recognition of the metaphor's failure or a political testimony about its moral superiority (Friedman 1988).

causative roles of class or the market, can oversimplify and even misrepresent patterns of social change and the significance of these patterns at particular points in time or in specific portions of a social system.

A primary example of the association between conceptions of process that are discontinuous and explanatory arguments that are reductionist has been the use of wage labor as an indicator of rural proletarianization.<sup>37</sup> While this certainly might be the case in specific circumstances, as a general proposition it sidesteps the significance of different wage labor shares, sources, and employment conditions for overall peasant household income and food security and for the fluidity of class formation and assumes that participation in wage labor alone is evidence of a unidirectional process of rural class formation. A related example has been the excessive reliance—by classical Marxists, neoclassical economists focusing on material determinants (such as Binswanger and Rosenzweig 1984, 1986), and functionalist anthropologists (such as Harris 1981)—on analyses of modes of production to explain rural political and organizational behavior. This is a strategy that depends on maintaining sharp distinctions between peasants and wage laborers—distinctions that are

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37. The rural/urban distinction is another example. The distinctiveness of "rural"—usually thought of as interchangeable with "agrarian"—compared to "urban"—usually thought of as interchangeable with industry and services—is becoming less reliable as a way of understanding economic development in rural Asia (Koppel 1986, 1991). There is evidence that Asia's rural transformation may well represent the emergence of a new form of socioeconomic organization: neither urban nor rural, as conventionally defined, but rather the product of increasingly intense interaction between urban and rural socioeconomic activity. Within these zones of interaction [the Jakarta-Bandung-Bogor triangle in Java; Central Luzon in the Philippines, Guangdong Province in China], one already sees an increase in nonagricultural activities (trading, transportation, services, and industry), high population mobility, and intensive mixtures of land use with agriculture, cottage enterprises, industrial establishments, and a wide variety of trade and service activities coexisting side by side (Ginsburg, Koppel, and McGee 1991). Although the concepts "rural" and "urban" continue to be meaningful as descriptors of systems of land use, these terms are becoming less meaningful in many parts of Asia to discriminate different patterns of socioeconomic development. Increasingly, socioeconomic change is not as neatly arranged along rural-urban lines (spatially or functionally) as previously thought. Interpreting these blurring distinctions, however, has proved to be a problem.

assumed to extend to differentiated social and political interests. As Ileo (1979) and Scott (1985) have argued, this additional assumption of instrumental interest formation may be far too simplistic and, in turn, may make the scope of the presumed differentiation between peasants and rural wage laborers problematic.

### **Comprehending Heterogeneity**

Heterogeneity of context has been a major stumbling block for theory development within the dominant paradigms of development studies and the social sciences. For example, Oshima (1983, 1984) and other economists (such as Ho 1986) have cited the seasonality of demand for agricultural labor, especially in Asia's tropical monsoon climates, as a principal cause of the variability of rural labor markets in Asia. They suggest that seasonality has a primary influence on the evolution and performance of rural labor markets for both agricultural and nonagricultural activities and argue that it is the major reason why South and Southeast Asia might not replicate the nonfarm employment experiences of Japan, Korea, and Taiwan. The insistence of many economists notwithstanding, this conclusion stands primarily as a hypothesis (Bradford 1986). The dynamics of the influence of seasonality on the differentiation of rural labor markets in Asia remains unexplained. Under what conditions, for example, are rural households actually subsidizing the participation of their members in the nonagricultural labor force and with what implications for household welfare and overall resource allocation? Seasonality undoubtedly is a factor in the variation of labor supply and demand, but it may be more important to understand why, across seasons, poorer households might be more vulnerable to low-wage nonagricultural employment (Wolf 1986). Similarly, how do markets for factors of agricultural production (land and capital) influence the evolution and performance of linkages between agricultural and nonagricultural rural labor markets? For example, how are changes in the organization and performance of rural credit markets associated with household savings

and welfare behavior, migration patterns, and the creation of rural enterprises (Bardhan 1980)?

### **Social Transformation and Human Action**

A troublesome problem in the debates about change in Asia is the issue of how broad transformation processes relate to explanations of human action. Reductionist arguments based most notably on class, mode of production, the market, and the state have portrayed rural sociopolitical action as simplistic and unidirectional. Recent research, however, is demonstrating that such arguments are highly selective about what sorts of action they recognize (Hart 1986b, 1994). Both complexity and variability in the sources, scale, form, and consequences of rural sociopolitical action are much greater than most development theory accepts. For example, processes of continuity and transformation throughout rural Asia are uneven in terms of which individuals, groups, institutions, and social, economic, and political relationships are affected and when and how.<sup>38</sup> This unevenness does not negate the possibility of theory, but it does pose a challenge to the level and breadth that theory should consider. In this context, inappropriate simplifications and omissions are crucial—not only because they deflect attention from the richness of the heterogeneous transformation patterns that appear to be present but also because they constitute a fundamental misspecification of what these patterns actually are. (See Harriss and Moore 1984; Herring 1984; Koppel 1986; Koppel, James, and Hawkins 1994).

### **Institutional Uncertainties**

The impasse in theory both reflects and creates significant institutional uncertainties in the organization and governance

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38. Consider, for example, the types of changes under way in rural credit systems: "The uneven spread of agricultural development and commercialization allows for the coexistence of diverse groups of lenders. Their different economic considerations lead to a sorting phenomenon whereby trader-lenders prefer to lend to rich households while farmer-lenders prefer to lend to poor households. This lender-sorting behavior has resulted in market fragmentation" (Floro 1987, 17).

of Asian studies and development studies about Asia. Does the impasse mean that development studies—its agenda already captured in many cases by economics—will just fall back into economics and other core social science disciplines? Or will development studies blend with the applied versions of those disciplines—rural and development sociology for sociology, agricultural and resource economics for economics, development administration and the policy sciences for political science?<sup>39</sup> In fact, both of these trajectories are evident. What are the implications of these alternatives for Asian studies—in terms of funding, student attraction, and faculty development? Would the relationships among the humanities and social sciences in Asian studies be strengthened or weakened by either of these trajectories? What would be the consequences for the overall quality of international research about Asia? Do all these questions point to the continuing reinforcement of disciplinary studies as the core of international studies about Asia? Or do they suggest how different forms of international study might be involved in a more fundamental restructuring of international learning in American higher education—a restructuring that makes interdisciplinary research and education a core constituent of academe?

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NEW PATHWAYS  
OR OLD  
ENCLOSURES?

In the 1950s and 1960s, the various committees for comparative and area studies at the University of Chicago (from which the journal *Economic Development and Cultural Change* evolved), and those organized by the Social Science Research Council and others at institutions such as Cornell, Harvard, and Michigan, all explored the possibilities of trans-disciplinary and possibly even unified social science theory. (See Stewart 1950; Cartwright 1951; Parsons 1949, 1951; Par-

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39. In universities where development studies and area studies programs cannot be declared as graduate majors, many of the students who minor in development studies do come from the applied core disciplines (rural sociology, agricultural economics, policy sciences, public administration) while many of the students who minor in an area studies program come from the core social sciences or humanities.



sons and Shils 1951; Grinker 1956; White 1956.) These possibilities were explored through programs of comparative research that were driven by efforts at cross-disciplinary theorizing. The objective was to build theoretical pathways across a presumed common ground for research on socio-cultural change.

The large-scale work of the Human Relations Area Files program at Yale University (HRAF 1952; Lagace 1974; Levinson 1977; Murdock 1982; Price 1989) and the utilization—initially by groups at the Rand Corporation and the University of Michigan—of multidimensional quantitative research analysis techniques such as factor analysis as central explanatory strategies were examples in the 1960s and 1970s of efforts to build and verify cross-cultural social science theory through identification and manipulation of presumed common attributes. These methodological developments in turn drove new interests in systems theory and other cross-disciplinary strategies (Charlesworth 1972; Kuhn 1974; Easton and Schelling 1991). While the classification of empirical data is an accepted early step in assessing the correspondence between a theory's categories and empirical data, the value of this correspondence as evidence can be overestimated. For many of the multidimensional analyses, demonstrating the feasibility of using the categories was often confounded with verifying the hypothesized explanations that generated the categories. This problem has been especially serious in economics, sociology, and political science.

Standing in sharp intellectual contrast to these impulses to integrate the common ground have been efforts based on the premise that the challenge of understanding comparative socioeconomic change is not a problem of comparative study (or international classification) for purposes of refining Western theory and promoting cross-cultural generalizations. Rather, it is a problem of accumulating culturally specific knowledge for understanding the unique characteristics of specific cases. The tension between the commitment to see each case "on its own terms" and the methodological requirement implicit in that imperative to have some strategy

for evaluating the uniqueness of specific knowledge systems (Nathan 1993) has led—especially in anthropology, sociology, political science, and economics—to persistent confusion between functionalism as a broad perspective on explanation (as in several forms of Marxist analysis) and functionalism as a basic strategy for identifying, organizing, and interpreting data (as in the persistence of the rational-actor model). This tension also lies at the heart of both the cultural critique of Asian studies and the PAR critique of development studies.

Today, the interest in new pathways must contend with the prerogatives of old enclosures. Development studies about Asia and area studies about Asia maintain an uneasy relationship as each attempts to maintain its own identity and continuity in both intellectual and institutional terms (Buck 1991). There are certainly numerous shared concerns, communicated for the most part across disciplinary bridges, and numerous individuals who can travel back and forth across those bridges, but there are dangers in ascribing more progress to this interchange than exists (Perkins 1983; Rosen 1985). What this bridge often amounts to is the reinsertion of a “soft” disciplinary vocabulary into the discourse between area studies and development studies. This can be seen, for example, in the acknowledgment through incorporation—but with compartmentalization—of cultural factors by development studies and in the limited admission—through acceptance of variables but without models—of economic factors into the normal discourse of Asian studies.

Yet even these acknowledgments are, in fact, contingent: these concessions are allowed provided that they enrich but do not materially alter the agenda that was already there. This proviso yields an ironic result: because the added vocabulary is categorized as “soft,” the proposed common ground between area studies and development studies turns out to be quicksand. Thus the social science discourse on universalism and particularism can actually strengthen the influence of the disciplines in both area studies and development studies by weakening the case for the quality of inter-

disciplinary research. And this is happening despite the professed interest of both area studies and development studies in interdisciplinary research. An indicator on many campuses is the loss of interest in area specialists who are trained as, for example, sociologists and the renewed emphasis on sociologists who have area competence. This is occurring at the same time that independent area studies programs are being replaced by interdepartmental committees.

A vocabulary for conceptual and methodological discourse that does not simply impose the categories of one perspective (and the power relationships of one professional community) onto another remains elusive. The issue has been treated as a technical problem amenable to compromise and negotiation, but this tactic avoids a fundamental issue: at stake here are not simply constructions of knowledge but the social relations that constitute the structures for legitimizing different forms of knowledge.<sup>40</sup> Thus while the terrain of scholarship about Asia is strongly contested—in both intellectual and institutional terms—the same factors that are signposts of boundaries are signposts as well of shared origins and common purposes. The question, therefore, is this: given the winds of change blowing through international studies, which of these signposts will remain standing and with what consequences for the future of international scholarship about Asia?

The question is additional evidence of the crisis in institutional relationships among area studies, disciplinary studies, and development studies on Asia. The details of the crisis reflect the complex coevolution of these three professional communities, their changing relationships to financial and political interests outside the university environment where they have been principally based, and the rise of a debate on multiculturalism and the academic curriculum that

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40. The notion that cross-cultural social science theory and methodologies are nonpolitical social relations continually needs to be contested (Bauzon 1991; Crocker 1989). Until this is done consistently, the real nature of the power relationships in the discourse cannot be identified.

will have important implications for expectations from education and scholarship about Asia in American universities. The clearest sign of the crisis is the uncertainty about the future of area studies as a distinctive organizational enterprise but also uncertainty about the future of international studies focused on Asia within disciplinary and development studies communities in the United States.

In the context of these uncertainties, there are clearly temptations to overcome both the appearance and the reality of fragmentation—in both institutional and professional domains. The temptations have different origins relating to control over key institutional, professional, and financial resources. Whatever the nature of the temptation, there is a shared recognition: continuing fragmentation of the common ground for scholarship about Asia could hurt the future of international scholarship conducted by the parties on the ground: the social sciences, Asian studies, and development studies. One need only consider the deterioration of financial support for scholarship about Asia in general to see the problem.

One strategy for addressing this uncertainty is through organizational steps to strengthen communication across fields. Another strategy, ascendant during the last decade, is to fall back on the hegemonic claims of the disciplines. The former strategy looks to cross-disciplinary solutions—for example, through forms of programmatic cooperation across university departments. The latter strategy looks to a reassertion of traditional discourse carried on principally within discipline-based departments. An important question, of course, is how different these alternatives actually are, given the hierarchy of power and resources in specific university settings.

Yet another strategy is based on a growing recognition that social science theory and methods applied to Asia through area studies, development studies, and disciplinary studies must find new directions for understanding comparative socioeconomic change generally and Asian development

experiences specifically.<sup>41</sup> One example is the reemergence of a neo-Weberian tradition in political science and sociology (Vandergeest and Buttel 1988). Writers in this tradition are beginning to overcome the problems of reification, functionalism, and teleology that have plagued both Marxist and liberal economic and sociological analyses (Bourdieu 1977; Giddens 1981; Scott 1985; Willis 1977). These developments have direct implications for social science theory about Asia. From these roots emerge possibilities for more basic paradigmatic change.

The rethinking is not only coming from disciplinary sources. Within Asian studies, the orientalist critique has encouraged stronger commitment to the preparation of more grounded histories. These are revealing not simply the intellectual costs of inappropriate metaphors and analogies but the profound political and social costs as well:

We have seen that even the poor and unfettered masses in the nineteenth century had the ability to go beyond their situation, to determine what its meaning would be instead of merely being determined by it. Not that the aspirations of the masses always were of a revolutionary nature or went beyond limited, private demands. Nevertheless, only those movements were successful that built upon the masses' conceptions of the future as well as social and economic conditions. The subjects of this book have at one time or another been called bandits, ignoramuses, heretics, lunatics, fanatics, and, in particular, failures. Not only has this been a way in which the "better classes" keep these people in oblivion: worse, this signifies a failure or refusal to view them in light of *their world* (Ileto 1979, 319).

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41. This point is both recognized and encouraged by a number of foundations, including those that have been traditional supporters of area studies. For example, in a letter distributed by the Mellon Foundation to a number of prospective grantees in February 1994, Harriet Zuckerman writes: "Over the past months, members of the Board of Trustees and staff have been reviewing the foundation's programs in area studies and the directions such programs should take in the future. Intensive consultation with scholars in a variety of disciplines and with specialized knowledge of many parts of the world have led us to conclude that much has been accomplished in the area studies programs the Foundation has supported in the past. At the same time, it seems clear that new opportunities exist for research and training in the humanities and social sciences which call for intensive comparative study."

The danger for Asian studies is that to simply reassert the virtue of the particular is to risk the sustainability of the area studies enterprise—especially in an academic marketplace returning to a less diluted version of a discipline-oriented power structure. At the same time, it is clear that understanding of Asia in development studies has been overdetermined by discipline-based conceptual and methodological metaphors and analogies that view both dissonance and variation as ultimately abnormal. Those metaphors and analogies must now be problematized—not only intellectually but organizationally and politically. The analyses will have to begin by understanding the social bases and political biases of crucial metaphors and analogies within contemporary international studies about Asia. How, for example, are stratification and mobility among Asianists, social scientists, and development specialists influenced by the perseverance of key metaphors? Beyond that, it also means understanding the counterhegemonic and oppositional processes that may exist within the American social science and Asian studies communities as well as within various development studies communities (Contreras 1991; Sandoval 1991; Palat 1994).

Problematizing crucial metaphors can help to clarify the political dimensions of relationships among disciplinary, development, and area studies. That alone is a key step in reassessing inherited schemes of interpretation (Miyoshi and Harootunian 1989; Huang 1991). Beyond that, there are the possibilities of eroding professional and paradigmatic boundaries—although it is not clear how far, in the context of contemporary universities, this process should go. Considering the current debate over multiculturalism on American campuses, it is clear that the question of relationships among area studies, disciplinary studies, and development studies about Asia will increasingly be drawn into debates less about Asia and more about Asians in the United States.

New forms of dialogue are needed—among the subregional specialties in Asian studies, between Asian studies in general and disciplinary studies in the social sciences, between the social sciences and the humanities on Asia, and

between Americans and Asians. As Charles Keyes (1992, 24) put it for Southeast Asian studies (but with application to Asian studies generally):

Southeast Asian studies is no longer a colonial enterprise entailing the study of "them" by "us." On the contrary, "they"—the Thai, the Indonesians, the Vietnamese, the Filipinos, the Malays, and so on—are engaged in pursuing research on their own, and sometimes neighboring, societies that is much deeper and richer than any carried out by Americans. Only by undertaking collaborative projects—conferences, training workshops, and joint research—and establishing institutional linkages between programs in the United States and centers and institutes in Southeast Asia can the field of Southeast Asian studies in the United States continue to develop. The future of the field lies in transcending its origins and in becoming a process of scholarly exchange flowing both ways across national boundaries.

A new vocabulary to describe organizational relationships as well as intellectual trajectories is needed if dialogues are to become more than a reproduction of existing relationships. Otherwise one has to be pessimistic about the possibilities for the kinds of analyses of metaphors called for here. Current initiatives for federal support of international studies suggest that the preference for cross-national dialogue and collaboration based on a reproduction of an older claimed hegemony and patronage will not dissipate quietly (Heginbotham 1992, 1994).

The difference will amount to whether the common ground among the social sciences, Asian studies, and development studies will yield new pathways or, to borrow Robert McCaughey's (1984) phrase, show further evidence of the "enclosure of American learning."

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## CONCLUSION

The evolution of scholarship about Asia in the United States is at a pivotal point—intellectually, institutionally, and financially. Outside the core social science and humanities disciplines, scholarship about Asia has evolved in two principal directions: area studies and development studies. Both fields have advanced as responses to limitations of disciplin-

ary frameworks and discourse—especially in the social sciences—and as strategies for addressing important cleavages in international studies—such as universalistic versus particularistic theory, disciplinary versus multidisciplinary learning, and basic versus applied research. The evolution of Asian studies and development studies over the last four decades also reflects the changing status of international studies within American universities as well as the changing agendas of government, foundation, and corporate interests. Within and across the two fields, there are significant oppositional movements—notably cultural studies and participatory action research. And all are being challenged by the growing use of the Internet for academic discussion.

The question arises: is the fragmentation both within and between Asian studies and development studies part of a sustainable future for dynamic scholarship about Asia or will it constrain such a future? Are these two fields essentially refugees from disciplinary dissension—implying that the future lies in the restoration of intellectual solidarity within the disciplines and their consolidation of institutional preeminence? Or are they settlers of new domains—implying that the future may lie in these new domains but with neither field necessarily as it is today? What, then, are the paths to connect area studies about Asia and development studies about Asia?

There are two paths between area studies and development studies—and both are contested. One of the paths, well traveled, is based on what the social science disciplines bring to both area studies and development studies. This path has well-defined and by now predictable institutional and intellectual characteristics. In one sense, while area studies and development studies are both refugees from the hazards of travel along this path, they have not fully escaped the demands of the path. The politics of their existence within universities is defined to a significant degree by their relationships to the social sciences. At the same time—as seen earlier in the review of theory problems in development stud-



ies—core intellectual debates about their coherence and directions are often extensions of arguments about the coherence and directions of the social sciences.

The other path, less traveled, is based on what area studies and development studies can bring directly to each other as well as to the social sciences. This path is not well defined; it is still unpredictable in both institutional and intellectual terms; and it is not widely recognized as even an option. While there is much discussion in mainstream Asian studies publications of transborder issues in Asian studies—a reference usually to the relationships between the humanities and the social sciences rather than the issue of cross-cultural and comparative studies—there is still no widely accepted venue for systematically discussing the relationships between Asian studies and development studies as contested fields. Certainly issues of comparative study are discussed in the mainstream journals of development studies, and even issues of relationships between the social sciences and humanities have a limited place—principally via the PAR critique. But the central issue here—the relationship between area studies and development studies about Asia—cannot be found there either.

This is not surprising. Preoccupation within these fields on issues of direction, coherence, and autonomy is certainly understandable (Liddle 1990). It can be argued that clarification of these matters within Asian studies and development studies is a necessary step for any serious discussion between the fields. Yet internal discussions are likely at best to emphasize uniqueness and difference—to place the highest value on maintaining independence—thereby weakening both the basis and the incentives for discussion about a broad reconstruction of scholarship about Asia. Indeed, the lesson of the institutional context within which these fields function is that such internal preoccupations, conducted independently, risk doing little more than rearranging the deck chairs on a listing ship. The problem, of course, is acknowledging that both are on the same ship. This is the venue-for-discussion

issue. Journals such as *Positions*, *Critical Inquiry*, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, and *Contention* are trying to offer such venues, but their initiatives have not been accorded consistent approval by the mainstreams of either Asian studies or development studies. This does not necessarily reflect on these journals, of course, but it does illustrate the difficulty of finding a middle ground that significant parts of both communities can occupy.

#### REASSESSING BOUNDARIES

The key is to reassess boundaries—both intellectual and institutional. If Asian studies and development studies are going to seriously explore common ground, they will have to reassess boundaries *jointly*—within and across both fields. This means a joint reassessment of the substance of Asian studies and its geographic subdivisions along with a joint reassessment of the substance of development studies about Asia. The dialogue will not be easy:

The challenge is to pierce the walls of separate literature, varying intellectual styles, and different audiences. We cannot close our eyes to the problems generated by comparison, but by the same measure we cannot simply abandon comparative analysis and the illumination and cross-fertilization that occur through it. If we do, we only hasten the disintegration of our common discourse, widening the divides between us (Migdal and Keeler 1993, 91).

Although the phrase “international scholarship” about Asia has been used here, this description says more about where the scholarship is conducted and by whom than it does about the diversity of perspectives.<sup>42</sup> This point, in turn, must be seen in the institutional context for Asian studies and development studies in the United States. If there is going to

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42. The large number of graduate students in the United States from the People's Republic of China is yielding a substantial harvest of dissertations on a variety of topics in Chinese politics, for example, but one is struck by how much they reflect the perspectives of their U.S. university advisers and how little they appear to offer Chinese views.

be meaningful conversation between these two fields, there must be a significant opening of the institutional context in which these discussions occur. Both fields in the United States must make a serious commitment to new forms of cooperative engagement with each other as well as with colleagues outside the United States. And in the case of international collaboration, this process must not proceed on terms predetermined by the U.S. side—such as simply extending the demarcations of the arguments in American universities.<sup>43</sup> Four areas of initiative are needed: within universities; within the professional communities and between universities; between the professional communities and their constituencies; and across national boundaries.

### **Within Universities**

Because universities remain the basic home for much scholarship and most education on Asia, it is logical to begin a discussion of initiatives here. There are several examples of the kinds of cooperative initiatives needed within universities. Where there are programs of Asian studies and development studies, there are opportunities for direct conversations on the future of scholarship about Asia—ranging from conceptual and methodological issues in research to problems of faculty development and career trajectories to issues of application and accountability in scholarship about Asia to reassessments of core curricula in international studies. This is not to suggest that the presence of these programs makes serious dialogue between the programs easy. In some cases, cross-appointments by faculty and cross-registration by

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43. Such initiatives will have to unfold against the background of a continuing asymmetry in educational exchange between the United States and Asia. The asymmetry operates not only in terms of numbers—almost four times as many students from Asia are studying in the United States as Americans studying in Asia—but also in terms of composition: almost half of the Asian students in the United States are graduate students whereas an estimated 8 percent of American students in Asia are graduate students (IIE 1993: v, 86–90; Koppel 1994). Nevertheless, the increasing numbers of Asians who complete doctoral degrees and stay in the United States as university and college faculty will undoubtedly have implications for patterns of transpacific discourse and cooperation.

students do build the infrastructure for dialogue. As noted earlier, however, considerable effort is often made by these programs to ensure the sanctity of distinct identities.

Nevertheless, the opportunity is there. Examples of what can be done range from thematic research colloquia to experimental curricula and degree programs (Brown and Ranney 1991; Noble 1994) to the types of dissertation workshops currently being supported by the International and Area Studies Office at the University of California at Berkeley (Szanton 1994). The dissertation workshops are an especially feasible example because they offer an early opportunity for boundary crossing (in part through reformulation of dissertation research problems and strategies) and for the creation of expanded intellectual networks at formative stages in a scholarly career.<sup>44</sup>

Even in universities and colleges that do not have both development studies programs and Asian studies programs, there are important opportunities for dialogue. While there might not be a development studies program, development studies can be found within most of the social sciences. These are points of engagement. In many cases, taking on these points of engagement may require beginning at the most elemental place: the individual departments. This approach would be especially appropriate where area studies positions are based in discipline departments. Discussion within the departments will not be easy, however, because of the tremendous pressure to phrase issues in terms of the disciplinary agenda. Moreover, assistant professors will often find it difficult to ensure their own promotion and tenure (a process requiring the agreement of their disciplinary peers) and maintain their visibility as Asianists if, for example, publications in Asian studies journals are not considered primary refereed journals for promotion and tenure. Thus intradepart-

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44. The Fulbright Group Projects Abroad Program is a potential mechanism for this purpose, although level funding and increasing project costs have reduced the number of awards from 43 in 1993 to a projected 19 in 1995.

mental dialogue may require importing area and development studies faculty from other departments.

*There is also the opportunity for engagement with the professional schools—especially business, international affairs, and public health. In many cases this engagement is already present in the form of joint appointments, articulated degree programs (such as B.A. and M.A. programs between a professional school and an area studies program), cross-listings of certain courses, and major-minor configurations for student concentrations. These foundations should be extended and elaborated—focusing especially on the question of applied research.*

#### **Within the Professional Communities and Between Universities**

Within the communities of scholarship about Asia and between universities and academic organizations outside the universities, there are several interesting possibilities. One idea is discussions between professional associations—although there is no single professional association for development studies that has a standing comparable to that of the Association for Asian Studies for area studies about Asia. This difficulty will have to be overcome through innovative engagement with development studies wherever and whenever possible—at jointly sponsored panels at professional meetings, for example, and in special issues of professional newsletters.

A second possibility is further development of the Joint Area Studies Committees currently sponsored by the American Council of Learned Societies and the Social Science Research Council. In fact, the committees were established originally for purposes close to those advocated here: “The committees operate under a dual mandate to promote work on their areas and, at the same time, to promote comparative and transnational scholarship drawing on expertise on their areas” (ACLS 1994, 5). In terms of how the committees have functioned and reproduced themselves, however, the record has been mixed.

A third possibility is to strengthen relationships between universities in proximate geographic areas,<sup>45</sup> and beyond that to four-year colleges and community colleges. Such initiatives will acknowledge that faculty, students, and administrators with serious interests in Asia are not confined to Asia-focused programs at prestige universities. As noted earlier, recruitment for Asianist positions at universities and colleges is intensely competitive. Indeed, most of the 131 Asian studies programs are not in the top ten "prestige" universities but in smaller universities and colleges.

There are several interesting examples of initiatives among the four-year colleges and community colleges. An example is the Asian Studies Development Program, a joint effort of the East-West Center and the University of Hawai'i. The program, with support from NEH, provides fellowships and seminars to support faculty from community colleges and four-year colleges with predominantly minority enrollments who want to strengthen their teaching on Asia. The program works in close cooperation with the American Association of Community Colleges (and its affiliate council, the American Council on International Intercultural Education), with the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, with the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, and with the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education. Currently, some 102 institutions are affiliated with the program. Course offerings about Asia are increasing at such institutions, although not under the umbrella of Asian studies programs. Such initiatives are important because the educational challenge in many of these institutions is to prepare people for nonacademic careers. Teaching about Asia, and the research needed

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45. One of the largest consortia of this type is SOCCIS (Southern California Consortium on Comparative and International Studies). Created in 1970, SOCCIS involves 14 universities, four-year colleges, and community colleges in southern California. An example of what could prove to be a foundation for the type of collaboration called for is the Northwest Regional Consortium for Southeast Asian Studies involving the University of Washington, the University of Oregon, and the University of British Columbia.

to support that teaching, has to be oriented to students who have professional rather than academic interests—both in what they need to know now and what they will need to learn in the future—and those who are often already holding jobs. In these cases, extensive academic preparation may be infeasible. For faculty, there is a complex and enormously significant challenge to bridge the central concerns of scholarship about Asia with the requirements of professional worlds with which they may not be familiar.

This suggestion for innovative engagement is made with full awareness of the problems involved (such as disparities in research infrastructure), but surely the value of improved articulation within the U.S. higher educational system around international education about Asia would outweigh the inconveniences.<sup>46</sup> Courses along this line have been suggested before, inasmuch as outreach to nontraditional constituencies is considered part of the mandate for centers supported by Title VI funds (Manning 1983):

The finding that a large proportion of FLAS Ph.D.s are teaching in smaller institutions, with only a few other faculty members specializing in their region of the world, suggests yet another important role for the large universities that train FLAS Ph.D.s. In our earlier visits to Title VI-funded centers, we found that some centers provide seminars, workshops, and library privileges to those teaching in nearby colleges as part of their outreach program. We suggested then that such use of center resources was one of the most effective types of outreach. Our findings from the current FLAS survey confirm this earlier recommendation (McDonnell 1983, 130).

The argument here is not simply to reaffirm the need to reach out to nontraditional constituencies, but to broaden the concept of the community of scholarship about Asia. What is needed now is a much stronger commitment to cross-institutional engagement—not simply for the sake of the faculty

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46. This will not be easy. These inconveniences are, for some, the prerogatives of academic privilege. And the culture of that prerogative is not irrelevant for the initiatives being urged here. In many professional disciplinary association meetings, panels of department chairs are typically organized with expectations that only those from the “prestige” institutions need speak.

member in the smaller college, but for the broader purpose of helping all participants in our higher educational system, wherever they participate, to gain access to serious understanding of the Asia-Pacific region.<sup>47</sup>

Another boundary within professional communities of scholarship about Asia must be jointly examined—that between research about Asia conducted principally to increase knowledge and research conducted principally to be applied. This is, of course, a socially constructed boundary about which much is made in many university settings (Koppel 1987). Given the financial pressures many universities are now facing, however, it is clear that the basic/applied distinction goes beyond the forms that research products take or the levels of literacy needed to understand them. Such criteria shift attention away from the need for area studies and development studies to achieve a balance between academic quality and social accountability. Although his example comes from a slightly different context, Charles Muscatine (1994, 11) makes the point very well: “The scope and scale of what is termed ‘research’ is still a vital public matter. As a professor of literature I belong to the Modern Language Association of America. It has about 30,000 members. What are their aspirations? I do not know, but simply ask: Does our nation need 30,000 literary researchers? It certainly needs 30,000 teachers of literature, and more.”

This is a good place to restate a point that is true for the United States as well as many parts of Asia—namely,

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47. The point need not be confined to higher education. There is a serious need for initiatives to strengthen teaching and curriculum about Asia in the K–12 range. One informal review of the national resource centers for Southeast Asia concludes hopefully: “In the best functioning centers outreach is well on the way to becoming ‘inreach.’ For instance, K–12 education connections are becoming institutionalized as integral components of center and institutional activities” (Paget, Hall, and Jantharat 1994, 5). One such initiative is the East-West Center’s Consortium for Teaching Asia-Pacific in the Schools (CTAPS). In 1995, the center and the Asia Society will begin cooperating to address these issues nationally. The CTAPS experience suggests that curriculum enrichment and teacher training, while important, are not sufficient. The host school and its administrative and policy environment must be actively engaged, too, if these curricular initiatives are to take root. Stated differently, attention to institutionalization is needed on both sides—the university and the school.



that individual patterns of professional development and career trajectories in Asian studies and development studies about Asia often straddle the basic/applied boundary. For the most part, this straddling has been viewed as either exceptional or deviant in terms of individual career trajectories—more often tolerated than approved, especially in university-based area studies programs. From professional and institutional perspectives, however, concerns about the straddling reflect different levels of understanding of academic and university responsibility to their various publics—among whom utility in some clear measure is not an inferior good.

### **Between Professional Communities and Their Constituencies**

There is an absolutely crucial question that is not often asked: who are the constituents of area studies and development studies programs about Asia, and what roles should these constituencies have in the paths taken by such programs? The message of the asymmetry between the growth of U.S. interests in Asia and the erosion of support for scholarship about Asia is this: the era of entitlement support for international studies generally and studies about Asia in particular is over. Both public and private support will become increasingly competitive—not simply as a matter of internal administration, but more fundamentally as a matter reflecting the increasing importance of other social and political demands.

Speaking about the challenges of reconstructing the social sciences, but making a point with wider relevance, James Zuiches (1994, 212) concludes: "I strongly support the concept that as trained social scientists we ought to be attempting to foresee issues and develop responses to future problems; but again unless there is open discussion with constituents, whom will we convince?" Faced by this challenge, Asian studies and development studies urgently need to jointly examine how they can define and maintain their intellectual autonomy—a point demanded by the cultural critique of Asian studies. But they also need to jointly assess how they can address their accountability to those who make their research possible—a point made by the PAR critique of

development studies specifically as well as by donors' critiques of international research generally.

Constituency issues are not new for the communities of scholarship about Asia, but they are certainly turning out to be imperative rather than preferential. Stanley Katz (1994, A56) puts the issue well: "We cannot wish away the public demand for accountability. The only way that we can avoid cumbersome and probably ineffective federal or state regulation is to define—and develop ways to assess—what we mean by quality education ourselves. Both public and private institutions should welcome the challenge to specify their educational goals and to develop ways to evaluate success in meeting their own standards." During the Vietnam War, Asianists in many universities and colleges became keenly aware that relationships between the communities of scholarship about Asia and the U.S. foreign policy system were either too intimate or too distant. As Oksenberg (1986, 1987, 1993) notes, the same problem has affected China studies for decades. For both China and Vietnam, the most important relationship was not between academics and politicians but between the understanding that academics have and the understanding that the general public has. *The Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*, which early on understood the need for Asianists to bring their work into wider political and policy arenas, continues. But the deeper lesson of the Vietnam period—that it is the literacy of the general public in a democracy which ultimately matters—appears to have been lost. Certainly, there is evidence that one reason for the growing influence of nonuniversity think tanks and policy forums is precisely because they are occupying a space the universities have abandoned—responsibility to address the *quality* of public education and dialogue about Asia.

Despite all this and with few recent exceptions, most notably with regard to China, the international studies communities on Asia appear to be increasingly susceptible to self-absorption rather than social accountability. This is a strong statement. It certainly bodes ill for the future of financial and political support for international scholarship about Asia.

But consider the situation. On many campuses, there is a widespread perception that area studies is self-absorbed, that it is passé, that it has a posture of entitlement in an era when entitlement itself is passé. Characterizing development studies is somewhat more complicated because of its fragmentation and lack of a common vision. Nevertheless, here too there is a discernible degree of self-absorption. One form focuses on the theoretical difficulties cited earlier. Another form is the post-Cold War euphoria that has affected many of the programs which focus on economic and political issues. This euphoria appears to make the need for more sophisticated understanding unnecessary—a position that does not bode well for the perceived utility of these programs.<sup>48</sup>

Yet there is an interesting exception to these characterizations of the self-absorption of both area studies and development studies. This can be seen in the growth of graduate programs on international affairs. At their best, these programs can be seen as attempts to offer a professional graduate degree useful to those whose career tracks are likely to lead to corporations, banking and investment, and other non-academic careers, including government. These programs are important steps because they acknowledge the growing non-academic interest and competence in Asia and the need for universities and colleges to address that domain. But in several cases, these programs do not appear to be based on a serious assessment of what is actually needed. Often there is an assumption that the prestige of the degree itself will carry enough weight. This supply-side expectation is not completely plausible. Professional programs should be developed in close collaboration with the nonacademic interests they presume to serve—which is why even mediocre MBAs may be more relevant than many international affairs degrees. In some cases, making international affairs programs viable will

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48. Some would argue that these groups are finding new "cold wars" to replace the old one. In this context, the debate around Huntington's 1993 *Foreign Policy* article on the "Clash of Civilizations" is significant. The temptations of cultural essentialism and the restoration of the orientalist legacy are clearly in the air. Perhaps this is why the major critiques of Huntington have come not from development studies but from cultural studies.

require not simply altering the content of traditional modes of education (that is, classes) but also considering more innovative revision of traditional learning modalities. For example, traditional postdoctoral opportunities should be rethought to permit professional development opportunities for those who are not on academic career tracks. Again, it is not simply nonacademic career needs that are being met: another bridge between Asian studies and development studies about Asia is being explored.

Relevance may come more easily for international affairs programs that are tied to a development studies foundation rather than those built on area studies foundations. This is because issues of comparative and regional analysis, policy assessment, and applied research are more likely to be found in development studies than area studies. But if international affairs programs are to become more than just applied international relations or applied international economics—both fundamentally disciplinary derivatives—they will also need the cultural and historical enrichment that area studies can provide.

What does constituency development mean for the financing of Asian studies and development studies about Asia? If the fields leave agenda setting to the foundations and the government, then utility for some will be equivalent to complicity for others—as the debate about the National Security Education Program demonstrates (Heginbotham 1992; Desruisseaux 1993).<sup>49</sup> Asian studies and development studies should set their own agendas, but they cannot do so in a manner that treats application as an inferior good if they seriously expect public support for their efforts—not when the disciplines, who after all can claim that they are the soul of the university, are also under pressure to be “useful.” And

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49. The National Security Education Program (NSEP) is an effort to reprogram CIA trust funds (\$100 million) to support international education, research, and language training. The program offers grants to institutions for research and education projects and portable fellowships to students for study and dissertation research. Funding for NSEP is \$8.5 million for 1995. This represents an interest yield on the NSEP trust funds. As an appropriation, it is down from \$20 million in 1994.

they cannot do so in a manner that is insulated from interaction with nonacademic interests—not if they expect their educational and research functions to be relevant.

There is an important opportunity here, but it is risky. To a significant degree, the financial support system for international studies about Asia reflects the overlaps and divisions in the scholarly communities. This should not be surprising. It is a consequence of the functioning of peer review systems, the relationships between traditional academic careers and staff work with the foundations, and the desire of various funding groups to maintain the identity and prestige of their awards. But consider Tables 2 to 4 and the continuing decline of real levels of federal support for dissertation research. It is now time to think about serious initiatives to develop dissertation funding consortia which share applicant lists and ensure that competitive selection processes do not exclude qualified but less entrepreneurial applicants. For example, the Association for Asian Studies and various development studies groups might—together with major funding groups—consider forming an “awards brokerage” system that channels applications to the most appropriate sources. The important point here is to explore areas for cooperation—and not to restrict such explorations to the prerogatives of established autonomies in the review and research resource allocation system.<sup>50</sup>

### Across National Boundaries

At the international level, a number of initiatives should be strengthened or undertaken. Programs for faculty mobility and exchange—such as the *UMAP effort*,<sup>51</sup> the Fulbright

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50. This will be true within major federal programs as well as between programs and their constituents. For example, John Loiello, associate director for educational and cultural affairs at USIA points out: “My view is that the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs as we see it today will be very different in two years. That does not mean that the thrust of its program activity will be different. There will be new partnerships and, indeed, the way we do business here will be different” (Rubin 1995, A15).

51. University Mobility for Asia and the Pacific (UMAP) is an APEC initiative supported especially by Australia and Japan.

program, the numerous USIA programs, and various other programs that support cooperative international research (USIA 1994)—can be strengthened by more careful attention to selection and review processes that advance participation and themes beyond established circles and conventional wisdom.<sup>52</sup> Foundations can play an important role by supporting national and regional conversations on scholarship about Asia—with special attention to building bridges across area studies and development studies.

More ambitiously, political and financial support is needed for efforts within the United States, within Asia, and between Asia and the United States for cooperative curriculum development, improved cross-accreditation, and enhanced student mobility involving Asian studies and development studies programs about Asia.<sup>53</sup> For example, it is crucial for more American students, including those at the postdoctoral and assistant professor level, to study with Asian professors in Asian universities—principally to learn about Asian perspectives on issues, theory, and methods. For this to happen on a serious scale, however, both academic and nonacademic leaders in the United States must take concrete steps to reward this kind of commitment.

In this context, one notes that informal discussions are under way to further internationalize key professional associations, notably the Association for Asian Studies. In one sense this has already happened through the demographic transformation in the community of scholarship about Asia in the United States. In another sense, however, membership in the Association for Asian Studies from persons outside the United States has been sporadic. The question of internationalization should be explored very carefully to

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52. The Fulbright program does appear to be moving in this direction; see Desruisseaux (1994a).

53. There are foundations on which such initiatives can be built. In Southeast Asia, for example, there is the Southeast Asia Universities Agroecosystem Network, which involves institutions from the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam, and China. The work they are doing straddles the border between Asian studies and development studies. See Hutterer, Rambo, and Lovelace (1985); Cuc, Gillogly, and Rambo (1990); Rambo (1991); Cuc and Rambo, (1993).

avoid, as warned earlier, extending the hegemony of American professional organization and reinforcing power relations within the U.S. Asian studies community. Transnational affiliation should be constructed in ways that strengthen, not weaken, the authenticity of local professional communities.<sup>54</sup> Given the diverse patterns of professional development and association within the United States and Asia, this is a complex issue.

In an important review of the Foreign Area Fellowship Program dissertation competition for Southeast Asia between 1951 and 1982, David Szanton points to an emerging difference in interests among successful applicants. He concludes that

the majority of the younger [American] scholars now entering the field are unconvinced by or are uninterested in the earlier approaches to "development," and wish to focus on what they take to be more fundamental questions regarding the basic units, structures, values and processes, both social and cultural, which provide the foundations from which these societies will continue to evolve. As it happens, this less immediately instrumental, more interpretative approach does not correspond to the powerful concern for applied or utilitarian research which dominates the research agendas of the scholars in the countries of the region, which may raise all sorts of difficult problems in the future. However, it may also represent the beginnings of intellectual maturity for Southeast Asian studies in the United States (Szanton 1984, 25-26).

While this pattern may have characterized the application pool for the Foreign Area Fellowship Program and indeed the international dissertation community in general during an earlier period, assessments for the last decade suggest that basic/applied distinctions are today a centerpiece of professional life in the United States as well as Asia. Thus efforts at transpacific engagement must be built on genuine recognition of the limits of transprofessional engagement

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54. There are already models on how to proceed—for example, the unfolding European initiative to strengthen Asian studies is built on membership by national associations.

within national communities. This is especially important in the American case, where there are serious temptations for hegemonic expansion (through manipulation of alumni networks and provision of research funding) rather than cooperative development. There is also serious potential for an engagement that projects a hierarchy and segmentation among forms of knowledge—hierarchy and segmentation that have been socially constructed and politically defined in the specific context of the American academe.<sup>55</sup>

Reaching agreement that new and more authentic modes of transnational engagement are a core feature of an Asian studies/development studies dialogue will be difficult. Such steps, *despite good intentions*, may be seen and indeed may evolve as simple restatements of the hegemonic presumptions of the American academe. The presumptions will be there, but their determinative roles must be continually challenged.

#### PROSPECTS

Taking steps to connect Asian studies and development studies about Asia will not be easy. In some universities and nonuniversity think tanks, there may be just enough engagement to make people believe there are no problems. In other circumstances, particularly where social science/humanities and basic/applied research dichotomies have been well elaborated in patterns of professionalization and distributions of administrative resources, people may believe there is no solution.

Fortunately, traditional boundaries are being questioned in different ways in different places. In some Asian studies programs, for example, the line between area studies and ethnic studies is not being assiduously avoided but, rather, is

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55. In this context, the professional communities for scholarship about Asia in the United States must recognize the importance of the Internet as a channel for transnational community building.



being creatively engaged (though with difficulty).<sup>56</sup> The call for more direct dialogue between Asian studies and development studies is not impossible—especially, as noted earlier, at universities and colleges where both Asian studies and development studies are present in substantial forms. It must be admitted, however, that at these universities the current levels and forms of dialogue are not a promising foundation. The ambitious student may find ways to cross the boundary and there are the occasional joint courses, but patterns of professional development remain strongly segmented. Leadership is needed at such institutions to transform dialogue from rituals in carefully structured boundary crossing into innovative forms of engagement in order to address problems of boundary maintenance.

Thus there are two paths. One path is well known and predictable, and for some it is advantageous, but it is likely to lead to the demise of many of the area studies and development studies initiatives that now exist. This will happen not because of a problem with transdisciplinary work per se. Many state universities are considering major reorganizations to improve their ability to address broad contemporary issues including environmental problems, health issues, gender relationships, and the like. It will happen because of a well-established belief that the substance and utility of Asian studies and development studies do not consistently reveal enough that is intellectually rigorous or conceptually distinctive to justify their aspirations for independence as fields. Government and foundation funding sources will certainly continue to play a role in balancing the more strident advocates of disciplinary superiority, but foundations and government financing at the levels and in the forms that will be available are not likely to reverse the trend in any significant way ..

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56. One example is the Center for Philippine Studies in the School for Hawaiian, Asian, and Pacific Studies at the University of Hawai'i. The center addresses both Philippine issues and issues concerning Filipinos in Hawai'i. Another example, present on several campuses, although not Asian, is the merger of centers on African studies with centers for African-American studies.

The second path is less well known, entails higher risk, and has an unclear destination, but it offers possibilities for the reconstruction of scholarship about Asia—in both intellectual and institutional terms. Reconstruction must be explored if the crisis in Asian studies and the impasse in development studies about Asia are to be overcome.

#### CHOICES TO RECONSTRUCT LEARNING

This paper began with a proposed relationship between the end of the Cold War and the future of scholarship about Asia. In concluding his piece on that subject, Stanley Heginbotham warns:

We should be clear, however, that government and not-for-profit leaders will undertake their reviews, reach their conclusions, revise their priorities, and reshape their budgets and programs, *with or without the participation of the community of international scholarship*. Unless we organize to engage with them, the debate will be less rich than it could be, and the organization of—and funding for—international scholarship will be ill-suited and inadequate to take on the new challenges and opportunities of a new era in research and training (Heginbotham 1994, 40).

It is important to understand what the choices really are. It is not clear that the challenge is to perpetuate all established modes of leadership for financing intellectual and institutional choices for scholarship about Asia. The continuing decline of federal support for scholarship on Asia alone suggests that perpetuating traditional leadership patterns may be imprudent as well as impractical. The question, therefore, is not whether the communities of scholarship about Asia should participate with government and not-for-profit leaders in setting priorities but, rather, which priorities should be set highest, what kind of leadership is needed to address these priorities, and where the leadership for such choices can be found.

The highest priority should be assigned to the joint exploration of the common intellectual and institutional ground between area studies and development studies about Asia.

The fundamental task for leadership is to help the various communities of scholarship about Asia recognize that their traditional positions of autonomy and privilege cannot be maintained if scholarship about Asia is to restore its dynamism, legitimacy, and relevance. The fundamental responsibility for leadership lies within the communities of scholarship about Asia—but communities that are defined broadly. The donors, who are after all part of these communities, have important roles to play, but as members of the communities. In particular, there is the complex issue of how the donors can work in close conjunction with a broad spectrum of the community—not to dictate the intellectual agenda, and certainly not to confirm the power of inertia, but rather to ensure that the agenda is dynamic, innovative, and relevant.

The responsibility lies with the professional community—but a community committed to overcoming its segmentation and associated territorialities. The foundations are part of this community and its problems of segmentation. Indeed, as suggested earlier, the foundations frequently function as instruments to legitimize rather than create patterns of segmentation and leadership within the community. The need for inclusiveness, the need to overcome fragmentation, and the need to challenge old presumptions about leadership must be recognized not just as preferences but as matters of urgency. Several key sources of federal funding that have been eroding may now plummet to levels which will bring home in the sharpest form the crisis of disarticulation discussed earlier. This development should not necessarily be welcomed, nor should the community be passive about pressing the claim that there are broad national interests which are enhanced by a more sophisticated understanding of Asia and Asians. Yet it is also necessary to recognize that the quality of scholarship about Asia in the United States will ultimately rest on the quality of choices made by, not simply for, the community of scholarship.

What is needed is not simply a revised agenda or a new list of priority topics. That is routine procedure in interna-

tional scholarship and business-as-usual in research funding. What is needed, first of all, is a reconstruction of the intellectual and institutional pathways for learning about Asia.<sup>57</sup> Fortunately, there are solid intellectual foundations upon which to base such a reconstruction. Jean Oi (1989) and Anna Tsing (1993) provide examples of scholarship that link understanding of history, language, and the social sciences and are situated in comparative frameworks. Moreover, the last four decades show us the limits of purely disciplinary strategies in this regard and indicate what the social sciences can give to Asian studies and development studies—in both intellectual and institutional terms.

The title of this essay, "Refugees or Settlers," might well have been "Refugees and Settlers." In reality, the latter have often been the former. The issue turns on identities and transitions in identities. For area studies and development studies about Asia, the question is whether they are finally refugees or ultimately settlers. Because the issue is in doubt, the essay asks: refugees or settlers? And the essay concludes that it is time for the Asian studies and development studies communities—using both intellectual and institutional innovations—to get serious and resolve, together, whether their futures are as refugees from old grounds or as settlers of new terrain.

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57. This point can be extended to the structure and role of universities generally (Featherman 1993).

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