Back issues of BCAS publications published on this site are intended for non-commercial use only. Photographs and other graphics that appear in articles are expressly not to be reproduced other than for personal use. All rights reserved.

**CONTENTS**

**Vol. 29, No. 1: January–March 1997**

Asia, Asian Studies, and the National Security State: A Symposium

- Mark Selden - Introduction
- Bruce Cumings - Boundary Displacement: Area Studies and International Studies during and after the Cold War
- James K. Boyce - Area Studies and the National Security State
- John Lie - Moral Ambiguity, Disciplinary Power, and Academic Freedom
- Chalmers Johnson - The CIA and Me
- George McT. Kahin - The Making of Southeast Asian Studies: Cornell’s Experience
- Tani E. Barlow - The Virtue of Clarity and Bruce Cumings’s Concern over Boundaries
- Moss Roberts - Contra Ideocracy
- Stanley J. Heginbotham - Round Up the Usual Suspects: Cumings’s Misdirected Search for Post-Cold War Enemies of Academic Independence
- L. A. Peter Gosling - The Association for Asian Studies and the National Security Education Program: Scholarship or Tabloid Journalism?
- Asian Studies, Ideology, and the National Security State: Articles in the *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*
- Documents Relating to Government-Academic Liaison
- Short Review
- Prasenjit Duara - *After Colonialism: Imperial Histories and Postcolonial Displacements*, by Gyan Prakash
CCAS Statement of Purpose

Critical Asian Studies continues to be inspired by the statement of purpose formulated in 1969 by its parent organization, the Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars (CCAS). CCAS ceased to exist as an organization in 1979, but the BCAS board decided in 1993 that the CCAS Statement of Purpose should be published in our journal at least once a year.

We first came together in opposition to the brutal aggression of the United States in Vietnam and to the complicity or silence of our profession with regard to that policy. Those in the field of Asian studies bear responsibility for the consequences of their research and the political posture of their profession. We are concerned about the present unwillingness of specialists to speak out against the implications of an Asian policy committed to ensuring American domination of much of Asia. We reject the legitimacy of this aim, and attempt to change this policy. We recognize that the present structure of the profession has often perverted scholarship and alienated many people in the field.

The Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars seeks to develop a humane and knowledgeable understanding of Asian societies and their efforts to maintain cultural integrity and to confront such problems as poverty, oppression, and imperialism. We realize that to be students of other peoples, we must first understand our relations to them.

CCAS wishes to create alternatives to the prevailing trends in scholarship on Asia, which too often spring from a parochial cultural perspective and serve selfish interests and expansionism. Our organization is designed to function as a catalyst, a communications network for both Asian and Western scholars, a provider of central resources for local chapters, and a community for the development of anti-imperialist research.

Passed, 28–30 March 1969
Boston, Massachusetts
Asia, Asian Studies, and the National Security State: A Symposium

Imaginative Geographies of the Pacific Rim

VOLUME TWENTY-NINE, NUMBER ONE
1997, $6.00
Subscriptions 1997

Visa and Mastercard accepted for subscriptions outside the U.S.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscription Type</th>
<th>1 yr.</th>
<th>2 yrs.</th>
<th>3 yrs.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regular (U.S.)</td>
<td>$25</td>
<td>$45</td>
<td>$62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside the United States</td>
<td>$26</td>
<td>$47</td>
<td>$65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individuals/Living</td>
<td>$18</td>
<td>$18</td>
<td>$18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in the Third World</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students/Unemployed</td>
<td>$18</td>
<td>$18</td>
<td>$18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutions/Libraries</td>
<td>$55</td>
<td>$57</td>
<td>$57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overseas Airmail</td>
<td>$18</td>
<td>$18</td>
<td>$18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Address correspondence to:
BCAS administration: BCAS, 3239 9th Street, Boulder, CO 80304-2112, U.S.A. Tel.: 303-449-7439. E-mail: <doub@cs.colorado.edu>
BCAS editorial: Tom Fenton, BCAS, 464 19th St., Oakland, CA 94612-2297, U.S.A. Tel.: 1-510-451-1742. E-mail: <tfenton@igc.org>

The Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars is published quarterly. Periodical postage is paid in Boulder, CO 80302 and additional offices. USPS 93938-040. Publisher: Bill Doub. Copyright © 1997 by the Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars, Inc., all rights reserved. ISSN #007-4810.

Editors
Bill Doub and Nancy Doub, managing editors
Mark Selden, regional and comparative editor
(Binghamton, NY)

Gail Omvedt
(Maharashtra, India)

Christi Seemann, editorial assistant
Peter Zarro, review editor
(Princeton, NJ)

E. Patricia Tsurumi
(Victoria, BC, Canada)

Stephen R. Shalom
(Montclair, NJ)

Research Board

East Asia
Linda Garl Arrigo
(Binghamton, NY)
Gene Cooper
(Los Angeles, CA)
Tom Fenton
(Oakland, CA)
Edward Friedman
(Madison, WI)
A. Tom Grunfeld
(New York, NY)
Ronald R. Janssen
(Hampstead, NY)
Richard Kagan
(St. Paul, MN)
Car Rishkin
(New York, NY)
Alvin Y. So
(Honolulu, HI)
Jonathan Unger
(Anberra, Australia)
Peter Van Ness
(Denver, CO)

Northeast Asia
Laura E. Hein
(Evanston, IL)
John Lee
(Urbana, IL)
Joe Moore
(Victoria, BC, Canada)
John Price
(Vancouver, BC, Canada)
David Satterwhite
(Seattle, WA)
Yuki Tanaka
(Doncaster, Vic., Australia)

South Asia
Doug Allen
(Orono, ME)
Amrita Basu
(Amarapura, MA)
Ashok Bhargava
(Madison, WI)
Hassan Gardazi
(Sault Ste. Marie, Ont., Canada)
Ron Herring
(Ithaca, NY)
Jim Matson
(Colorado Springs, CO)

Southeast Asia
Nina Adams
(Springfield, IL)
Peter Bell
(Purchase, NY)
Bruce Crumblin
(Hartfield, NE)
Richard Frankie
(Montclair, NJ)
Ben Kierman
(New Haven, CT)
Donald M. Nunn
(Chapel Hill, NC)
Robert Stauffer
(Honolulu, HI)


Advisory Board

Herb Bix
(Withrops, MA)
Bruce Cuming
(Evanston, IL)
John Dower
(Cambridge, MA)
John T. Junkerman
(rlington, MA)
Nakamura Masaomi
(Tokyo, Japan)
Rob Steven
(Sydney, Australia)
Asoka Bandaraage
(HPad Hadley, MA)
Paresh Chattopadhyay
(Montreal, Que., Canada)
Jana Everett
(Denver, CO)

Noam Chomsky
(Lexington, MA)
Robert Cribb
(Copenhagen, Denmark)
Benedict J. Kerkvliet
(Canberra, Australia)
Ngo Vinh Long
(Waterford, MA)
Kristin Petze
(Kaawa, HI)
Michael Vickery
(Penang, Malaysia)

The Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars is a refereed quarterly that welcomes unsolicited essays, reviews, translations, interviews, photo essays, and letters about Asia, particularly those that challenge the accepted formulas for understanding Asia, the world, and ourselves. Manuscripts submitted should be unpublished and not under consideration for publication elsewhere, and should be sent in quadruplicate to Tom Fenton, 464 19th St., Oakland, CA 94612-2297, U.S.A. (also reachable at <ftfenton@igc.org>). For more details, send for a copy of our "Guidelines for BCAS Authors" or look at it on our web site, which is located at <http://cs.colorado.edu/bcas/bcashome.html>. For more information about reviews, see the Books to Review section of this issue. The Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars, Inc., is a nonprofit corporation, and contributions are needed, appreciated—and tax-deductible.
Contents

Asia, Asian Studies, and the National Security State: A Symposium
guest editor Mark Selden

Mark Selden 3 Introduction
Bruce Cumings 6 Boundary Displacement: Area Studies and International
Studies during and after the Cold War
James K. Boyce 27 Area Studies and the National Security State
John Lie 30 Moral Ambiguity, Disciplinary Power,
and Academic Freedom
Chalmers Johnson 34 The CIA and Me
George McT. Kahin 38 The Making of Southeast Asian Studies:
Cornell’s Experience
Tani E. Barlow 43 The Virtue of Clarity and Bruce Cumings’s
Concern over Boundaries
Moss Roberts 47 Contra Ideocracy
Stanley J. Heginbotham 50 Round Up the Usual Suspects:
Cumings’s Misdirected Search for Post-Cold War
Enemies of Academic Independence
L. A. Peter Gosling 53 The Association for Asian Studies and the
National Security Education Program:
Scholarship or Tabloid Journalism?
56 Asian Studies, Ideology, and the National Security State:
Articles in the Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars
57 Documents Relating to Government-Academic Liaison

Ravi Arvind Palat 61 Reinscribing the Globe: Imaginative Geographies
of the Pacific Rim; Coming Full Circle: An Economic
History of the Pacific Rim, by Eric Jones, Lionel Frost,
and Colin White; Global Production: The Apparel
Industry in the Pacific Rim, ed. Edna Bonacich, Lucie
Cheng, Norma Chinchilla, Nora Hamilton, and
Paul Ong; What Is in a Rim? Critical Perspectives
on the Pacific Region Idea, ed. Arif Dirlik / review essay

Short Review

Prasenjit Duara 70 After Colonialism: Imperial Histories and
Postcolonial Displacements, by Gyan Prakash

72 Books to Review

© BCAS. All rights reserved. For non-commercial use only. www.bcasnet.org
Contributors

Tani E. Barlow teaches in the Women's Studies Department at the University of Washington in Seattle, Washington, U.S.A. She is editor of positions: east Asia cultures critique. Her most recent publication is T. E. Barlow, ed., Formations of Colonial Modernity in East Asia (1997).

James K. Boyce chairs the Economics Department at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, Massachusetts, U.S.A., and chaired the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) / American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) Joint Committee on South Asia. He is the author of The Philippines: The Political Economy of Growth and Impoverishment in the Marcos Era, and coauthor of A Quiet Violence: View from a Bangladesh Village.

Bruce Cumings teaches in the history and political science departments at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, U.S.A. He is the author of The Origins of the Korean War (in two volumes), War and Television, and Korea's Place in the Sun: A Modern History.

L. A. Peter Gosling is professor emeritus of anthropology at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, Michigan, U.S.A. For many years he served as the secretary-treasurer of the Association for Asian Studies.

Stanley J. Heginbotham is a visiting scholar at the New York Academy of Sciences, where he is writing a book on merit-based competitions in the world of science and scholarship. He was previously vice-president of the SSRC, a deputy program director at the Ford Foundation, chief of a research division of the Congressional Research Service at the Library of Congress, a professor of political science at Columbia University, and chair of the Joint South Asia Committee of SSRC and ACLS.

Chalmers Johnson taught for thirty years at the Berkeley and San Diego campuses of the University of California, and he now lives in San Diego, California, U.S.A. He is the author of Peasant Nationalism and Communist Power (1962), An Instance of Treason: Ozaki Hotsumi and the Sorge Spy Ring (1964, 1990), MITI and the Japanese Miracle (1982), and several other books. Today he is president of the Japan Policy Research Institute, a nonprofit organization devoted to public education about Japan and trans-Pacific relations.

George McT. Kahin is an emeritus professor of government and international studies at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, U.S.A. He served as executive director and then associate director from 1951 to 1960 and director from 1961 to 1970 of the university's Southeast Asia Program, and as director of the Cornell Modern Indonesia Project from 1954 to 1988. His writings include Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia, Intervention: How America Became Involved in Vietnam (coauthored with John W. Lewis), and Subversion as Foreign Policy (coauthored with Audrey Kahin).

John Lie is the head of the Department of Sociology at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Illinois, U.S.A. His publications include Three Kingdoms, translator and editor of Chinese Fairy Tales and Fantasies, and the translator of Mao's Critique of Soviet Economics. A former book review editor for the Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars (BCAS), he is a long-term supporter of BCAS.

Moss Roberts teaches Chinese at New York University in New York, U.S.A. He is the translator of the Ming novel Three Kingdoms, translator and editor of Chinese Fairy Tales and Fantasies, and the translator of Mao's Critique of Soviet Economics. A former book review editor for the Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars (BCAS), he is a long-term supporter of BCAS.

Mark Selden teaches sociology and history at Binghamton University in Binghamton, New York, U.S.A. He is currently editing a new series at Routledge called Asia Rising, and a series at M. E. Sharpe, Socialism and Social Movements. His most recent book is Living with the Bomb: American and Japanese Cultural Conflicts in the Nuclear Age, coedited with Laura Hein.

The 1971 picture on the front cover calls our attention to government/intelligence involvement with academics, the subject of the symposium featured in this issue of the Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars (BCAS). The symposium explores how money and power in association with military and intelligence goals have shaped and continue to shape Asian studies and the social sciences. BCAS has discussed this issue before, but now the time seems ripe to reconsider state-driven agendas and debates such as those concerning rational choice, globalization, and other challenges to area studies. This illustration is by Jim McConnell, and it is from Ramparts (Berkeley, CA), vol. 10, no. 8 (Feb. 1972), p. 36.

Our deepest appreciation to Mark Selden for guest editing this issue's symposium, and to Stephen Shalom for helping him critique its contents. We also wish to thank Moss Roberts for providing and preparing the accompanying documents, Tom Grunfeld for assembling the list of related material in BCAS, and Doug Allen for coming up with graphics for both the front and back covers as well as one for the symposium itself. The CovertAction Quarterly and its predecessor, the CovertAction Information Bulletin, were also exceptional sources of graphics, as were previous issues of BCAS, which we used pictures from to underscore the continuity of BCAS concern with the issues discussed in the symposium. We, Nancy and Bill Doubl, however, take full responsibility for the choice of graphics and the contents of their captions. Lastly, a special thanks to Bruce Cumings and those who responded so capably to Cumings's article, especially those who wouldn't ordinarily publish with BCAS. —EDs.
Asia, Asian Studies, and the National Security State: A Symposium

Introduction

by Mark Selden*

Nearly three decades ago, at the height of the Indochina Wars, the Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars (CCAS) began probing the relationships between knowledge and power and between structural and financial imperatives and scholarship. As the CCAS statement of purpose framed it in the charged atmosphere of spring 1969: “We first came together in opposition to the brutal aggression of the United States in Vietnam and to the complicity or silence of our profession with regard to that policy.” The world has since undergone profound changes, as have many of the ways it has been studied. For all these changes, however, the original concerns for the relationship between knowledge and power, and between scholarship and the state, retain their salience and are addressed here.

The issues articulated and contested in this symposium also relate to important contemporary developments:

The emergence of a post–Cold War order structured by international capital in an era of regionalization and globalization.

The rise of maritime Asia and the Asia-Pacific region in the world economy.

Scholarly trends ranging from new approaches in cultural studies to rational choice theory and the rise of feminist and Asian diasporic perspectives that challenge methodological foundations as well as geographical, temporal, and ideological boundaries and approaches of previous area studies.

A shift underway in the social sciences from area studies to global and comparative studies, and the attendant drying up of U.S. government and foundation resources for Asian and area studies.

As this symposium was in preparation, public debate erupted over the propriety and consequences for responsible scholarship of naming centers for Chinese studies at Berkeley and elsewhere after the late President Chiang Ching-kuo of Taiwan—for a mere $3 million topping off a previous $15 million grant—and over aggressive Clinton administration solicitation of multimillion dollar political contributions from Asian corporate donors. The brouhaha in the media, of course, ignored the U.S. predilection for naming our own universities, museums, libraries, and foundations after such moral paragons as the Rockefellers, Carnegies, Fords, Mellons, and Olins. In such matters it is always the new and the “other” that strikes sparks. Likewise, while long accustomed to the uses and abuses of U.S. funds to buy elections, to overthrow elected governments, and to undermine or replace nonelected governments from Latin America to Southeast Asia, Americans have expressed shock over the threat of Asian money politics to the sanctity of a U.S. political process that is in fact awash in money. If the terms of the discussion have been skewed or framed narrowly and provincially, the ethical-political issues are nevertheless genuine.

The contemporary surfacing of Asia at the center of conflicts over money, politics, and scholarship reflects a situation in which the world’s most powerful nation has become the leading debtor nation, together with the rise of new centers of financial power so that Asian governmental and private funds now play a role in shaping U.S. politics, economics, and cultural and intellectual life. If the surfacing of Asian money in U.S. politics inaugurates a new page in the history of the Asia-U.S. relationship and the politics of scholarship, equally surely it represents growing pains associated with possibilities of a more balanced relationship between Asia and the United States. The ways these funds are used, and particularly the openness and integrity of the

*I thank Steve Shalom for his counsel on all aspects of this symposium.
processes by which they are allocated, will in the long run overshadow issues of their origins.

Composed of an article by Bruce Cumings, eight responses to it, a letter, four related documents, and an introduction, this symposium focuses on two moments in the creation and development of Asian studies in the United States. First, the symposium examines the birth of the field—during the height of the Cold War—as a creation of the national-security state, or what Cumings calls the state/intelligence/foundation nexus, which structured, financed, and set formative research agendas and methodologies at the time. Second, the symposium assesses how the sea changes in the contemporary Asian regional and global situations relate to emerging scholarly trends.

In contrast to their tacit consensus on the Cold War origins and shaping of the field, the symposium respondents hotly debate Cumings's analysis of the present and future course of Asian area and international studies, as well as his assessment of the contributions and limits of area studies and the respective roles of the Social Science Research Council and the Association for Asian Studies.

It is a measure of how far we have come in the last three decades that Cumings's important archival research on the Cold War origins of the field, building on the contributions of Sigmund Diamond and earlier CCAS researchers, is taken as virtually presuppositional by the diverse panel of respondents assembled here. None, for example, question the evidence that Henry Kissinger at Harvard, William Buckley at Yale, or President Raymond Allen at the University of Washington, regularly spied for the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), providing information concerning “subversive activities” at these institutions in the early 1950s. Nor is there dissent from findings concerning Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) funding and domination of the research agenda at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)'s Center for International Studies, at Harvard's Russian Research Center, or Columbia's Russian Research Center; or of the evidence of close collaboration between the CIA and the Ford Foundation in setting intellectual agendas in the 1950s, including leading participants in China studies at major centers. Indeed, several discussants use this account as a springboard for elucidating other opaque or tarnished corners of the picture, drawing on their own research, newly discovered documents, and personal experience.

This apparent unanimity on historical issues is particularly striking given that the symposium participants span nearly three generations of Asia specialists and their research focuses respectively on one or more of the major subregions of East, Northeast, Southeast, South Asia, or on Asian diasporic studies and Asian-U.S. relations. The participants also include people who at various times in their careers have been associated (often in leadership positions) with one or more of the following organizations: the Social Science Research Council (SSRC), the Association for Asian Studies, the Central Intelligence Agency, and the Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars.

Cumings's judgment on the dawn of area studies, particularly the fate of its practitioners in the heyday of McCarthyism in the early 1950s, provides a critical reminder of constraints that shaped such fields as the study of contemporary China and Vietnam, in which “scholars studying potential enemy countries” either “consulted with the government or they risked being investigated by the FBI.” The FBI's rooting out of progressive or independent-minded faculty on many campuses, in collaboration with some administrators and faculty, left deep scars and created a climate of fear among Asia specialists and others in the universities and government. The hand of the state also, of course, extended overseas as intelligence agencies sought to recruit U.S. students and scholars conducting research or studying in Asia in the 1950s and 1960s as informants and spies. This fact, similarly well known at the time, has also been largely absent from the public record.

Military-intelligence interests, often but not always cloaked in secrecy, structured the main contours of such fields as political development and modernization studies, including Asian studies, at leading centers from the University of Washington to MIT and from these centers to a burgeoning field of study expanding throughout U.S. colleges and universities in anticipation of the growing U.S. role in Asia and Asia's growing global importance. Dilemmas that surfaced then and since confronted Asian and other area specialists. The cases of Karl Wittfogel and George Taylor of the University of Washington exemplify the choices that many area specialists and other faculty confronted in the early 1950s: after being publicly attacked as communists or sympathizers, both men became informers and testified against Owen Lattimore, and Taylor's testimony was critical in the firing
Many of the key issues of this symposium come down to money and power: (1) U.S. scholars needing funding to carry out their research, (2) the growing ethnocentric conviction in the United States that all cultures are as motivated by a desire for material development as we are, (3) the post-Cold War change in U.S. government and intelligence priorities from defense against communism to more blatant protection of U.S. transnational corporations and other concerns abroad, and (4) the shift in the world's wealth so that Asian countries are now using their wealth within the United States to further their own interests. With the caption "News item: Asian leaders welcome the news of President Bill Clinton's re-election," this Morgan Chua cartoon from the Far Eastern Economic Review (FEER), 21 Nov. 1996, comments on political donations to Clinton's presidential campaign from Taiwan and Indonesia. This cartoon is reprinted here courtesy of Morgan Chua and FEER, and the graphic on the previous page showing a fistful of money is from the Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars, vol. 3, nos. 3-4 (summer-fall 1971), p. 132.

of Korean-American scholars and other University of Washington employees who were accused of subversion.

Cumings does not shrink from exploring ambiguities related to his own research and professional activities, and, tacitly, that confront other scholar-activists who have challenged either U.S. foreign policy or the policies of other nations: many of us have confronted dilemmas associated with maintaining scholarly integrity and speaking unpopular truths while accepting government and foundation funding, in wrestling with issues of "pure" versus policy-oriented research, and in some instances in participating in restructuring processes such as those sponsored by the Social Science Research Council and its committees.

The lead article of this symposium enunciates a central tension noted and explored by some respondents. While elucidating a hidden history of state and intelligence subversion of Asian studies and area scholarship, it strongly asserts that there is much to preserve in the finest achievements of area studies. The field certainly includes people who resisted career and financial temptations to subordinate their work to interests of the state in favor of scholarship and teaching that has highlighted, for example, patterns of oppression and resistance in Asia and in U.S.-Asian relations. Familiarity with Asian languages, histories, and civilizations continues to offer the best possible, indeed the only possible, foundation for a humane understanding of, and public policy toward, the region. The resolution of this tension in the assessment of Asian studies surely lies in significant part in recognizing the achievements and building on the foundations of the best-informed critical and principled scholarship, particularly the scholarship that emerged out of the intellectual and political clashes of the 1960s, not only with respect to U.S. policies toward Indochina and China, but also extending to reassessment of dominant models and approaches to understanding Asia, Asian peoples and cultures, and ourselves.

In contrast to their tacit consensus on the Cold War origins and shaping of the field, the symposium respondents hotly debate Cumings's analysis of the present and future course of Asian area and international studies, as well as his assessment of the contributions and limits of area studies and the respective roles of SSRC and the Association for Asian Studies. The respondents offer diverse assessments of the history, boundaries, and research priorities of Asian studies as well as of current boundary displacements and methodological conflicts. They suggest diverse approaches to framing the relationship between knowledge and power, including the role of the CIA in a democratic society. They explore the tensions between scholarly commitments to the truth and service to the state, and between areas studies and global and comparative studies in a changing world in which the regional, the global, and the civilizational appear to be eroding borders and displacing many national and local features.

If there is a single issue that the respondents fully agree on, it may be the continued need to open the records and reveal the "hidden transcripts" in order to facilitate understanding of the intersecting government-intelligence-military-foundation-corporate-university ties that have structured and shaped Asian and international studies.

The ways in which these funds are used, and particularly the openness and integrity of the processes by which they are allocated, will in the long run overshadow issues of their origins.

Bruce Cumings's response will appear in the next issue of the Bulletin. The editors welcome reader contributions to the symposium, notably to debates over the historic patterns of institution formation, funding, and scholarship, and over the future course of Asian area and international studies, including the possibility of a humane and informed scholarship that transcends national and corporate agendas. If you wish to comment on or discuss this symposium, or respond to it in the Bulletin, please e-mail Mark Selden at <ms44@cornell.edu>, or write to him at 4 Triphammer Lane, Ithaca, NY 14850, U.S.A.
Boundary Displacement: Area Studies and International Studies during and after the Cold War

It is a curious fact of academic history that the first great center of area studies... [was] in the Office of Strategic Services... It is still true today, and I hope it always will be, that there is a high measure of interpenetration between universities with area programs and the information-gathering agencies of the government.

McGeorge Bundy, 1964

By Bruce Cumings*

In this article I propose to examine the displacement and reordering of the boundaries of scholarly inquiry in the postwar period in two phases: the first, the determining burst of academic work that began during World War II but vastly expanded in the early years of the Soviet-U.S. confrontation, which is the necessary prelude to understanding the second phase, namely the contemporary revaluation of American studies of the rest of the world occasioned by the end of the Cold War and the collapse of Western communism. My position is that the ultimate force shaping scholarly studies of what used to be called the non-Western world is economic and political power, but the most interesting effects of such power are often the least observed, taking place at those local points or "ultimate destinations" (in Foucault's phrase) where power becomes capillary, like universities and academic departments, and the organizations that mediate between academe and the foundations—for example, the Social Science Research Council (SSRC). In this process of power-becoming-capillary but in newly rearranged rivulets, we can discern both the original strengths and weaknesses of the "area" boundaries, the disordering occasioned by watershed changes in power politics and the world economy, and emergent new relationships between power and knowledge.

If the first phase has been much studied, it is still rare to find an acknowledgment of the often astonishing levels of collaboration between the universities, the foundations, and the intelligence arms of the U.S. state that accompanied this phase. If the second phase unfolds intermittently before our eyes (and with only partial information, much as in the late 1940s), it is remarkable how central the intelligence function has been to it. Since I propose to offer an assessment of such relationships, among others, let me say that in this article I do not assume a moral position, nor do I wish to indict individual academics or take to task the foundations or SSRC, nor am I involved in conspiracy theory. In earlier public presentations of versions of this article such comments have predictably come up: I must be

* I presented some of the ideas in this paper at the Association for Asian Studies (AAS) in 1993, on a panel held in honor of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars (CCAS) and its Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars (BCAS). I presented a much-revised version at the 1996 AAS meetings, and future versions with different emphases will appear in books to be edited by Christopher Simpson (for the New Press) and by H.D. Harootunian and Masao Miyoshi (for Duke University Press). For their helpful comments I would like to thank Arif Dirlik, Bill and Nancy Doub, Harry Harootunian, Richard Okada, Moss Roberts, Mark Selden, Chris Simpson, Marilyn Young, Masao Miyoshi, and Stefan Tanaka. Obviously I am responsible for the views presented herein.


3. Barry Katz has written an informative, well-researched book that nonetheless barely scratches the surface in examining the problems inherent in professors doing intelligence work; furthermore, he ends his story in the late 1940s. See Foreign Intelligence: Research and Analysis in the Office of Strategic Services, 1942-1945 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989). Robert B. Hall's seminal study done for the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) in 1947 still makes for interesting reading, but Hall, of course, would not have had access to classified intelligence documentation on the government's relationship to area studies. See Hall, Area Studies with Special Reference to Their Implications for Research in the Social Sciences (New York: SSRC, 1947).

4. See the asterisked footnote in the previous column for details about the earlier presentations of this article.
Marxist economists Paul Baran and Paul Sweezy, shown here in the New York office of the Monthly Review a number of years after World War II, were among the more than nine hundred leading thinkers, promising young scholars, and other diverse professionals who were conscripted during World War II to use their academic training to work in the Research and Analysis Branch of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) to analyze war and potentials for peace. Although the OSS is considered the forerunner of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and the participation of these scholars to have set the stage for future government involvement with academia, many feel that their work was different—and commendable—because it took place during a crisis that threatened all of humanity. This picture is from and courtesy of the Monthly Review Foundation.

trying to single out and blame scholars who worked at some point in their careers for the government, and in so doing I must be asserting an evil conspiracy. Rather, what I wish to do is evaluate contemporary boundary displacements in the unblinkered light of what we now know about the early years of area and international studies.

Perhaps I should also make clear my position on academics in government service. In an earlier draft of this paper I stated that working for the government against Hitler was different from doing the same type of thing during the Cold War; the difference, it seems to me, is that between a crisis that drew nearly every American to the effort against the Nazis and Japan in conditions of total war, to Washington and overseas posts distinct from campus positions, and the very different requirements placed upon scholars and universities in peacetime: to uphold their independence and academic freedom, and to make full disclosure of possible biases deriving from clandestine sponsorship and privileged access to research funds. To join, say, an Office of Strategic Services (OSS) inhabited by Paul Baran, Cora DuBois, John King Fairbank, Hajo Halborn, Charles Kindleberger, Wassily Leontief, Herbert Marcuse, Barrington Moore Jr., Franz Neumann, and Paul Sweezy was almost to be asked to join the best faculty the United States could assemble to defeat Hitler. (The luminous names do not provide their own justification for such service, of course; Charles Beard set a different sort of example when he resigned from Columbia University in protest of Woodrow Wilson’s drafting of college students in World War I, and then interrogated Franklin Roosevelt’s prowar policies in publications written both before and after World War II.)

A commentator argued that by saying such things I had given up a principled position of academic independence: working for the state was always wrong. I disagree; to offer one’s expertise to the Research and Analysis Branch of the OSS does not compromise academic integrity, in my view, if we stipulate that (1) the war is one of total mobilization against an enemy clearly determined to take away all our freedoms, including academic ones; (2) one takes a leave of absence from the classroom to serve this war effort, establishing a clear difference between the two domains of the state and the university, and (3) classified work does not continue after reentry to the university. These same principles, of course, argue for a complete separation of intelligence and academic functions in ordinary times. Nothing should be more sacred to faculty offered tenure-to-the-grave security and full legal protection for their viewpoints, however heretical, than honesty and full disclosure before their colleagues and students—something unavailable to those who sign agreements never to speak or write about what they do for intelligence agencies.

These prefatory points are necessary because it was the OSS director William “Wild Bill” Donovan who established in 1941 the rationale for employing the nation’s best expertise “to collect and analyze all information and data which may bear upon national security”; present at this creation were representatives of SSRC and the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) who helped Donovan come up with “a slate of [academic] advisors” for the OSS. Donovan’s relationship to left-leaning academics was similar to General Leslie Groves’s collaboration with Robert Oppenheimer on the Manhattan Project, but it yielded a political spectrum in the OSS from anticommunist Bulgarian emigre Philip Mosely to the Marxist founders of the Monthly Review, Paul Baran and Paul Sweezy. The research and analysis branch of the OSS also presented a model for postwar collaboration between intelligence and academia.


6. The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), for example, enjoins its employees from ever writing about anything to do with their work for the agency without a prior security vetting, and forever prosecutes or hounds employees who write about their experiences anyway (like Frank Snepp and Phillip Agee).

and influenced the division of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) into separate research and operations branches. In many ways it also helped to create the basic division between the academic disciplines and something that soon came to be called "area studies."

For a generation after World War II the bipolar conflict between Moscow and Washington and the hegemonic position of the United States in the world economy drew academic boundaries that had the virtue of clarity: "area studies" and "international studies," backed with enormous public and private resources, had clear reference to places or to issues and processes that became important to study. The places were usually countries, but not just any countries: Japan got favored placement as a success story of development, and China got obsessive attention as a pathological example of abortive development. The key processes were things like modernization, or what was for many years called "political development" toward the explicit or implicit goal of liberal democracy.

What I wish to do is evaluate contemporary boundary displacements in the unblinking light of what we now know about the early years of area and international studies.

The Association for Asian Studies (AAS) was the first "area" organization in the United States, founded in 1943 as the Far Eastern Association and reorganized as the AAS in 1956. Before 1945 there had been little attention to and not much funding for such things; but now the issues were to be ones that would bring contemporary social science theory to bear on the non-Western world, although not on the classic ones of Oriental studies, often examined through philology, political scientists would begin talking to Orientalists, and in return for their sufferance, the Orientalists would get vastly enhanced academic resources (positions, libraries, language studies)—although a certain separation came from the social scientists inhabiting institutes of East Asian studies, whereas the Orientalists occupied departments of East Asian languages and cultures. This implicit Faustian bargain sealed the postwar academic deal—and meant that the Orientalists didn't necessarily have to talk to the political scientists after all.

Countries inside the containment system, like Japan or South Korea, and those outside it, like China or North Korea, were clearly placed as friend or enemy, ally or adversary. In both direct and indirect ways the U.S. government and the major foundations traced these boundaries by directing scholarly attention to distinct places and to distinct ways of understanding them (for example, communist studies for North Korea and China and modernization studies for Japan and South Korea). To be in "Korean studies" or "Chinese studies" was to daily experience the tensions that afflicted Korea and China during the long period of the Cold War. Over the decades of the Cold War this revaluation by power gave us two tropes, yielding an entire inventory of East and Southeast Asia. The first trope was "Red China," and the second (accomplished by a Nixonian transition in the 1970s in response to defeat in Vietnam) was "Pacific Rim." Each trope valued and revalued East and Southeast Asia, as Westerners (mostly Americans) recognized and defined it, in ways that highlighted some parts and excluded (or occluded) others.

When East Asia was "painted Red" it held an apparent outward-moving dynamic whose core was "Peiping." According to Dean Rusk's 1960s scenario, 400 million Chinese armed with nuclear weapons threatened nations along China's rim with oblivion: South Korea, South Vietnam, Taiwan, Indonesia, Thailand, and the big enchilada, Japan. "Pacific Rim" was the post-1975 artistry, an era of forward movement and backward occlusion, as Americans sought to "put Vietnam behind us." "Pacific Rim" thus heralded a forgetting, a hoped for amnesia in which the decades-long but ultimately failed U.S. effort to obliterate the Vietnamese revolution would enter the realm of Korea, "the forgotten war." But more importantly, it looked forward: suddenly the rim became the locus of a new dynamism, bringing pressure on the mainland of Asia.

Rimspeak, like modernization theory, continued to look with curiosity if not disdain upon anyone who did not privilege the market. The many working-class and antisystemic movements of the region in the past decades remained poxes, irrationalities that illustrate immature "political development" in the rim. Organized into the new inventory were "miracle" economies in Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Malaysia, and Singapore, with honorable mention for Thailand, the Philippines, Indonesia, and post-Mao (but pre-Tiananmen) China (signified by "Beijing," which is the Ted Koppel-approved way to say Beijing). The centerpiece in the region was Japan, a newly risen sun among advanced industrial countries—indeed, "Number One" in Ezra Vogel's perfectly timed book, published in 1979. From the 1950s through the late 1980s it was almost heretical to utter a critical word about postwar Japan, or to point out that in the midst of the Korean "miracle" Park Chung Hee and Chun Doo Hwan were beating the brains out of thousands of workers and students, jailing and torturing professors, and bivouacking their troops on elite university campuses.

When the Cold War ended and Western communism collapsed in 1989–91, a third revaluation unfolded. One set of rationales for studying "areas" (or areas in particular kinds of ways, namely communist studies) collapsed, while another—"development," whether economic or political—deepened. In effect the previous boundaries disappeared as the framework

of inquiry distended to approximate the reach of the world market; the dawning “world without borders” collapsed area studies into international studies. Even the “Pacific Rim” gave way to a new globalism, as Japan’s economic bubble burst and the United States finally emerged as the mature hegemonic power of the century. It turned out that we were now living in a world economy, something that radicals had written about for decades but that now materialized as the essential domain of U.S. activity and academic endeavor.

The state and the foundations were the quickest to sense this displacement and to redirect practical and scholarly efforts. The Clinton administration moved toward a major emphasis on foreign economic policy, and the foundations moved to attenuate their support for area studies, emphasizing instead interregional themes like “development and democracy.” SSRC and ACLS, long the national nexus for raising and administering funds for area studies, found their very existence threatened and began a major restructuring for the first time in more than thirty years.

The source of power had shifted in the 1990s from the state’s concern with the maintenance of Cold War boundary security to transnational corporations that, as the organized expression of the market, saw no geographic limit on their interests. Sponsors’ expectations of area experts likewise changed quickly: a Kremlinological opinion about “China after Mao or Deng” was less interesting than informed judgments on “China’s economic reforms: whither the old state sector?” and the like. The entire field of communist studies found itself alone with the intelligence agencies and the Pentagon, searching for a function after the object of their desire had rolled itself back to nothing. A government publication that had exemplified the age now exemplified the transition: to change “Problems of Communism” to “Problems of Post-Communism” delimits and even announces a certain post-Cold War marginality.

As postwar history unfolded, in other words, scholars caught up in one historical system and one discourse that defined discipline, department, area, and subject suddenly found themselves in another emerging field of inquiry, well in advance of imagining or discovering the subject themselves. To put a subtle relationship all too crudely, power and money had found their subject first, and shaped fields of inquiry accordingly. I will now revisit in more detail the origins of area and international studies in the early Cold War period, examine how both changed with the end of the Cold War, and suggest how we might rethink boundaries of area and discipline and reengage our minds with the task of understanding the world outside U.S. boundaries.

In the Cold War decades after World War II the U.S. position in the world economy and rivalry with the Soviet Union determined what was important to study and how it was funded and studied in the United States. Missing from much of the literature extolling the South Korean economic “miracle,” for example, was the fact that thousands of its workers and students were being beaten and professors tortured and jailed by their government. This picture shows army troops leading away roped-together students on 27 May 1980 after protests in Kwangju, South Korea, led to the indiscriminate massacre of an estimated 1,000 or more civilians. This photo and information about the Kwangju Massacre are from AMPO: Japan-Asia Quarterly Review (Tokyo), vol. 12, no. 2 (1980).
Area and International Studies in the Early Cold War

The channel is more important than that a lot of water should be running through it.

McGeorge Bundy

After World War II ended, the new area programs and associations (like the AAS) instantly confronted the existing boundaries of the social science and humanities disciplines; this often made for interesting intellectual confrontation as well. William Nelson Fenton was present at the creation of area studies, and in 1947 he wrote that area programs "faced fierce resistance from the 'imperialism of departments' since they challenged the fragmentation of the human sciences by disciplinary departments, each endowed with a particular methodology and a specific intellectual subject matter." 11

The anthropologist Cora DuBois thought that the collaborative work of the OSS during the war was the prelude to a new era of reformist thinking on an interdisciplinary basis: "The walls separating the social sciences are crumbling with increasing rapidity. . . . People are beginning to think, as well as feel, about the kind of world in which they wish to live." 12 Postwar area studies, much maligned as the precinct for atheoretical navel-gazing and Orientalia, was beginning to challenge the parochialism of the disciplines in the name of a unified knowledge.

Still, these were not the power lines that counted. The state was less interested in the feudal domains of academe than in filling the vacuum of knowledge about a vast hegemonic and counterhegemonic global space; it was the capillary lines of state power that shaped area programs. This was effected in the first instance by the relocation of the OSS's Soviet division to Columbia University as the basis for its Russian Institute, which opened in September 1946, and in the second instance by a Carnegie Corporation grant of $740,000 to Harvard to establish its own Russian Research Center in 1947. 13 Soon the Ford Foundation put in much more money, a total of $270 million to thirty-four universities for area and language studies from 1953 to 1966. 14

This munificent funding created important area programs throughout the country, and provided numerous fellowships that allowed scholars to spend years in the field acquiring difficult languages and other forms of area knowledge.


McGeorge Bundy, however, was much closer to the truth in linking the underpinnings of area studies to the intelligence agencies—the OSS, and subsequently the CIA. William Donovan may have directed the wartime OSS and then returned to Wall Street, but he was also in many ways the founder of the CIA. 15 In his papers, combed through by the CIA and then deposited at the Army War College, there is a brief account of the original development of "foreign area studies," in which Donovan, George F. Kennan, and John Paton Davies played the major roles. Davies had a plan to transform area studies and bring enormous amounts of government and foundation funding into U.S. universities through what was originally to be an institute of Slavic studies, but which subsequently became a model for the organization of studies of the communist world of threatened Third World areas.

Donovan, who was then with the Wall Street firm Donovan, Leisure, was at the center of this effort, working with Davies in 1948 and helping him to get foundation funding. The organizers specified that the government was not to be involved publicly in developing area studies, thus to allay suspicions that such programs were little more than "an intelligence agency." Their work should be "impartial and objective," clear of conflicts of interest, and so on. (Indeed, the files on this project are full of concern with academic independence and proper procedure.) However, in a letter to Donovan, Clinton Barnard of the Rockefeller Foundation—which with the Carnegie Corporation funded this effort at the beginning—wrote, "the most compelling aspect of this proposal is the intelligence function which the Institute could perform for government." 16

Sigmund Diamond greatly expanded our understanding of the establishment of area studies centers during the early years of the Cold War in his book Compromised Campus. Diamond paid particular attention to the Russian Research Center at Harvard, which, following upon Columbia's Russian Institute and Davies' Slavic studies institute, became a model

15. See Betty Abrahamson Dessants, "The Silent Partner: The Academic Community, Intelligence, and the Development of Cold War Ideology, 1944-1946," annual meeting of the Organization of American Historians (28-31 Mar. 1996). Katz (Foreign Intelligence, pp. 57-60) maintains there was a break between the antifascist politics of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) and the anticommunist politics of the CIA, but a close reading of his text suggests many continuities into the postwar period, in the persons of Alex Inkeles, Philip Mosely, W. W. Rostow, and numerous others; an alternative reading would be that the antifascists, many of them left-liberals, were either weeded out or fell by the wayside, distressed at the turn taken by U.S. Cold War policies after 1947.

16. The letter is dated 28 Oct. 1948. Those who wish to pursue this matter can find additional documentation in the William Donovan Papers, Carlisle Military Institute, box 73a. Others included in this effort were Evron Kirkpatrick, Robert Lovett, and Richard Scammon, among many others. Christopher Simpson terms this same operation "the Eurasian Institute," listing it as a special project of Kennan and Davies, in which Kirkpatrick participated. See Simpson's Blowback: America's Recruitment of Nazis and Its Effects on the Cold War (New York, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1988), p. 115n. Diamond also has useful information on this matter in Compromised Campus, pp. 103-105.
Nadav Safran, above, was one of the thousands (approximately 5,000 in the late seventies) of academics in the United States working secretly for the CIA. In 1986 he stepped down as the director of Harvard’s Center for Middle Eastern Affairs after it was discovered that he was on the CIA payroll. He had been paid $107,000 by the agency to write a book about Saudi Arabia, and $45,000 to organize a university conference on Islam. His contact with the CIA specified that he conceal the source of his funding and submit his book to the agency for censorship. It has been estimated that while about 60 percent of the academics working for the CIA know that is what they are doing, the others do not.

This photo and the information about Safran and other academics working for the CIA are from Ami Chen Mills, “Covert Hand in the Academic Cookie Jar,” CovertAction Information Bulletin (Washington, D.C.), no. 38 (fall 1991), pp. 18-19.

...for other area programs on Eastern Europe and China. It was also a model of cooperation with the CIA and the FBI.

Although Diamond’s government documents on Harvard in this period have been greatly expurgated—and Harvard’s own papers remain closed to scholars under a fifty-year rule—he was able to document that the Harvard Russian Research Center was based on the wartime OSS model (like Columbia’s); that the center was deeply involved with the CIA, the FBI, and other intelligence and military agencies; that several foundations (Carnegie, Rockefeller, Ford) worked with the state and the center to fund projects and, in some cases, to launder CIA funding; that the same scholars, in turn, were responsible for denouncing other scholars to the FBI; and, finally, that these academics were major figures in the postwar development of Russian area studies in the nation as a whole.17 By 1949 Harvard and the center had established a mutually satisfactory relationship with the local FBI office: indeed, results of the Russian Research Center’s work were “made available to the Bureau officially through contact with President James B. Conant of Harvard University, who has on occasion indicated his respect for the Bureau’s work and his understanding for its many and varied interests in connection with internal security matters.” At roughly the same time Conant also negotiated basic arrangements between Harvard and the CIA.18

I frequently chide myself for running afoul of what I might call the fallacy of insufficient cynicism. I had not, for example, thought that J. Edgar Hoover enjoyed being wined and dined by major figures in organized crime, or that the Mafia had blackmailed him (either because of his closet homosexuality or his gambling debts) into refusing for years to investigate organized crime, even into denying that there was such a thing.19 Nor had I imagined the lengths to which the FBI would go to investigate even the most trifling aspects of life in academe in the early Cold War period. It is only a bit of an exaggeration to say that for those scholars studying potential enemy countries, either they consulted with the government or they risked being investigated by the FBI; working for the CIA thus legitimized academics and fended off J. Edgar Hoover (something particularly important for the many scholars born in foreign countries, or the many one-time communist emigrés now engaged in anticommunist research).20

Why did so many of the major figures in academe and the foundations, and particularly the leaders of area centers, have CIA ties and background?

Diamond’s papers contain large files of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) material on nationwide FBI investigations of academics in the early fifties. Although most of the files are still thoroughly blacked out by “declassification” censors (in truth there has been hardly any declassification on this issue), there is enough to indicate that any hearsay, any wild charge, any left-of-center organization joined, any name

17. Diamond, Compromised Campus, chaps. 3 and 4.

18. Boston FBI to FBI Director, 9 Feb. 1949, quoted in Diamond, Compromised Campus, p. 47; see also pp. 109–110.

19. Anthony Summers, Official and Confidential: The Secret Life of J. Edgar Hoover (New York, G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1993). Summers’s evidence on Hoover’s cross-dressing homosexual encounters is thin and is offered mainly to titillate, but his extensive information on Hoover’s suborning by organized crime seems undeniable.

20. For example, the Sigmund Diamond Papers (at Columbia University) contain an enormous file on Raymond A. Bauer’s inability to get a security clearance to consult with the CIA in 1952–54 because he had once been an acquaintance of William Remington, whom the FBI thought was a communist (see box 22).
entered on a petition for whatever cause unacceptable to the FBI (like peace or racial integration), any subscription to a magazine the FBI didn’t like (for example, the Nation or the New Republic) was enough to get an entry in the file. The FBI routinely checked the credit records of academics, tailed them around, monitored their lectures, questioned their colleagues and students, and sought out reliable campus informants (William F. Buckley, Jr. distinguished himself at Yale by becoming an important source for the FBI, as did Henry Kissinger to a lesser degree at Harvard).  

---

The rise of the rational choice and formal theory paradigms of social science inquiry have put at risk the subfields of economic history, historical sociology, and comparative politics, and the entire area studies project.

---

One FBI memorandum on Harvard goes on for forty-two pages with a detailed account of its courses on the USSR, complete with syllabi, teachers, and the content of the courses. Another has extensive reports on lectures at Harvard sponsored by the John Reed Club (which future Japan scholar Robert Bellah chaired, and which had as its members future China scholars Albert Feuerwerker and Franz Schurmann). Academics working on East Asia, of course, were particularly vulnerable to FBI harassment; those working on the USSR were as well, but more Asianists seemed to have come to the FBI’s attention. The reasons for this were deeply involved with the history of those fields—the fact that the USSR never inspired much sympathy among academics in the postwar period, but China, pre- and post-1949, did. The Korean War, for example, had an immediate impact on Harvard’s policies toward the John Reed Club. Two months after the war began Harvard banned the club from using Harvard facilities, unless it went through a lot of formalistic procedures (membership lists, sources of funds, and so forth) not required of other groups. In the same period Harvard security people blocked China-hand Israel Epstein from speaking at a club gathering. An FBI informant in the Reed Club reported that the war in Korea was the cause of this new policy, and that some club members did not want to register with Harvard for fear that their names would be turned over to the government.

---

24. Boston FBI report of 1 Nov. 1950, ibid. Box 14 also has an extensive file on Robert Lee Wolff’s security check before he became a consultant to the CIA in 1951.

---

Mosely at Columbia

If Harvard’s Russian Research Center were the only place where such intelligence ties and government interference went on, it could be dismissed as an aberration. Unfortunately it was a central model for area programs around the country, as was the one at Columbia University. Philip Mosely ran Columbia’s Russian Research Center for many years; an OSS Research and Analysis branch veteran, he was one of the most important figures in Russian studies and U.S. foreign policy in the 1950s. In addition to directing Columbia’s center, he was head of the Council on Foreign Relations from 1952 to 1956, a member of various boards and committees at the Ford Foundation, and a prominent leader of the American Political Science Association. His papers raise the same question Sigmund Diamond raises in his book: Why did so many of the major figures in academe and the foundations, and particularly the leaders of area centers, have CIA ties and background?

Although Mosely’s papers contain little formerly classified material, his nearly constant involvement with secret government agencies is clear from the late 1940s through his retirement from Columbia in the late 1960s. The sketchy and incomplete nature of his papers make it impossible to know exactly what he did for the CIA and other agencies, or whether he had such clearances at all times. But his continuing relationship with intelligence groupings is clear. One example would be his communication with W. W. Rostow in 1952 about which portions of Rostow’s “classified project” on the “dynamics of Soviet society,” a project

---

25. Mosely’s files show that in 1949 he worked with the Operations Research Office of Johns Hopkins on classified projects; that he had a top secret clearance for CIA work in 1951 and 1954; that in 1957 he had CIA contracts and was a member of the “National Defense Executive Reserve” assigned to the “Central Intelligence Agency Unit,” and that he renewed his contracts and status in 1958; that he worked on an unnamed project for the Special Operations Research Office of American University in 1958; that he was cleared for top secret work by the Institute for Defense Analysis (IDA, a major academic arm of government security agencies) in 1961; and that in the same year he kept Abbot Smith of the CIA informed about his travel to the USSR in connection with ACLS/SSRC work on academic exchanges with that country. See Philip Mosely Papers, University of Illinois, box 13, Operations Research Office to Mosely, 28 Feb. 1949 and 2 Nov. 1949 (the latter memo refers to “the optimum use of the social sciences in operations research”). See also “National Defense Executive Reserve, Statement of Understanding,” signed by Mosely on 19 Dec. 1957 and renewed on 26 June 1958 (the latter memo also refers to a “contract” that Mosely has with the CIA, separate from his activities in the “Executive Reserve”). And see Mosely to Abbot Smith, 10 Mar. 1961. Mosely begins the letter to Smith: “In accordance with the present custom I want to report my forthcoming travel plans.” Smith, an important CIA official and colleague of Ray Cline and William Bundy, among others, is not here identified as a CIA man. But he is so in Ludwell Lee Montague, General Walter Bedell Smith as Director of Central Intelligence (University of Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992), pp. 138–39, where information on Abbot Smith’s CIA work can be found. In 1961 Mosely worked with the IDA on a secret project, “Communist China and Nuclear Warfare” (S.F. Giffin, Institute for Defense Analysis, to Mosely, 24 Nov. 1961, and Mosely to Giffin, 6 Dec. 1961). See also various memoranda in box 2, including a record of Mosely’s security clearances. Mosely was an American of Bulgarian extraction; unlike most Bulgarians, he hated the Soviets.
Mosely was an adviser for, should be released for publication. Another would be Frederick Barghoorn's letter to Mosely in the same year, asking for Mosely's help in getting government work for the summer: "In addition to some sort of official interview project or intelligence operation, it has occurred to me that perhaps I might obtain some connection with the State Department's educational exchange project." 27

In 1955 John T. Whitman of the CIA wrote to Mosely, asking that Mosely schedule recruitment interviews for him with students at Columbia's Russian Institute, "as you so kindly did for Messrs. Bloom, Bradley and Ferguson last year." Mosely was happy to oblige. Meanwhile Mosely was an active partisan in the politics of the McCarthy era, testifying before the Subversive Activities Control Board in 1953, for example, that an unnamed "respondent's" views and policies "do not deviate from those of the Soviet Union." This testimony was part of the Justice Department's attempt to get the Communist Party-U.S.A. (CP-USA) to register under the McCarran Act, whereupon its members could be jailed. 28

Mosely was a central figure at the Ford Foundation throughout the formative years of U.S. area studies centers. On 5 May 1953 Ford's Board on Overseas Training and Research approved an agenda for implementing a program of "Coordinated Country Studies." Shortly thereafter Paul Langer wrote to Mosely stating that the first item in regard to implementation would be consultation with CIA director Allen Dulles. After suggesting that a person high in the foundation should consult with Dulles, the other items to be discussed were listed as follows:

(b) In what terms are the projects to be presented to the CIA? (c) To what extent will the Foundation assume responsibility toward the government in regard to the political reliability of the team members? (d) Should mention be made of the names of persons tentatively selected? (e) Should the directors of the proposed study projects be informed of the fact that the CIA has been notified? 29

Another memorandum from the Ford Foundation concerning "implementation of the proposed country studies" 30 said in the second paragraph that "Carl Spaeth [of Ford] offered to call Allen Dulles to explain in general terms the nature of the proposed studies," to be followed up by a more detailed presentation of the projects in a meeting between Cleon Swayne, also of Ford, and Allen Dulles. (Here, however, the purpose of these contacts with the Central Intelligence Agency was said to be "merely to keep interested government agencies informed.")

Other memoranda in Mosely's files show that plans for these "country studies" spawned some of the most important works later published in the field of comparative politics; for example, Langer recommended Lucian Pye for work on guerrillas in Malaya, and suggested "a broadly conceived" study of Burmese government and politics (which Pye also did somewhat later, although he was not recommended for it in this memorandum). Langer also wanted a study of Turkey as "a special case in the Near East" of "smooth development toward democracy" and immunity "to the appeals of communism." Among other scholars, he thought Dankwart Rustow would be good for the task; Rustow, together with Robert Ward, later published a central work on how Japan and Turkey modernized successfully. 31 (There is no evidence in these memoranda that Pye or Rustow knew that they were under consideration for such tasks.)

Later in 1953 the Ford Foundation sponsored a Conference on Soviet and Slavic Area Studies to discuss a program of fellowships in that field. Major academic figures in Soviet studies like Mosely, Merle Fainsod, Cyril Black, and Frederick Barghoorn attended; also attending was China specialist George Taylor. Government figures present included George Kennan, Paul Nitze, Allen Dulles, and several CIA officials. Pendleton Herring of SSRC attended as well. 32 Among other things, the conference fretted about "loyalty" checks on grantees, and therefore suggested denying fellowships to "partisans of special Soviet movements and recognized supporters of political parties inimical to the best interests of the United States." Although this stricture was directed primarily at the CP-USA, the language was broad enough to include, say, supporters of Henry Wallace's Progressive Party; the Carnegie Corporation also extended such concerns to a variety of liberal academics. 33

One apparent result of this program was a CIA-sponsored study entitled "Moslems of Soviet Central Asia" done by Richard Pipes, a well-known Harvard historian of Russia who eventually became responsible for Soviet affairs on Ronald

32. "Report Submitted by Paul F. Langer to the Director of Research, Board on Overseas Training and Research, the Ford Foundation," 15 Apr. 1953, ibid. The books Pye later authored were Guerrilla

33. The conference was held 9-10 Oct. 1953. See the list of those who attended, Mosely Papers, box 18.

34. Ibid, box 18. As Diamond shows, such considerations extended to Carnegie's acknowledged policy of excluding scholars who were "way to the left," which at one point led to worries about Derk Bodde and Arthur Schlesinger Jr., and major fretting about Gunnar Myrdal; however, these cases paled before Carnegie's concerns about the Institute of Pacific Relations and Owen Lattimore (Compromised Campus, pp. 299-301.)
Reagan's first and most ideologically committed National Security Council. In 1953 and 1954 Langer, Mosely, and others also sought to develop Chinese studies along the lines of their previous work in Russian studies. The Ford Foundation's decision in the late 1950s to pump at least $30 million into the field of Chinese studies (to resuscitate it after the McCarthyite onslaught, but also to create new China watchers) drew on the same rationale as the Russian programs examined above: "The investment strategy was based on the model designed just after World War II by cooperation on the part of the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the Rockefeller Foundation in supporting Soviet studies, initially and principally through grants to Columbia and Harvard Universities." 37

That Mosely provided a working linkage among Ford, the CIA, and ACLS/SSRC well into the 1960s is suggested by Abbot Smith's 1961 letter to him, referring to lists of possible

36. Ibid., Swayze to Mosely, 21 Oct. 1954; Langer said he was involved in developing Chinese studies in Langer to Mosely, Spaeth and Swayze, 17 May 1953.
new CIA area studies consultants whom he wished to clear with Mosely, William Langer, and Joseph Strayer. (Smith was described as the director of the CIA’s “consultants’ group.”) In Mosely’s response he recommends among other people China scholar John M. Lindbeck of Columbia, A. Doak Barnett (China watcher then with the Ford Foundation but soon to join the Columbia faculty), and Lucian Pye of Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) (“my first choice”). In 1962 Mosely told James E. King of the Institute for Defense Analysis (IDA), a major academic arm of government security agencies, who had proposed a three-year program of some sort to Ford, that “of the major foundations, only Ford has shown a willingness to mingle its money with government money, and even it is rather reluctant to do so;” Mosely counseled King that “the question of ‘end-use,’ that is, whether classified or publishable, is important to the foundation.” Other evidence suggests that Columbia professors like Mosely and Zbigniew Brzezinski worked closely with the IDA, both in supporting students completing dissertations, like former CIA employee Donald Zagoria, and in bringing IDA people into Brzezinski’s Research Institute on Communist Affairs.

“‐There is no making sense of the world by those ignorant of local context‐specific issues; and there is no making sense of the world by those indifferent to cross‐regional and global forces.”

This incomplete but important evidence from the Mosely papers suggests that the Ford Foundation, in close consultation with the CIA, helped to shape postwar area studies and important collaborative research in modernization studies and comparative politics that were later mediated through well‐known Social Science Research Council projects (ones that were required reading when I was a graduate student in the late 1960s). According to Christopher Simpson’s study of declassified materials, however, this interweaving of foundations, universities, and state agencies (mainly in intelligence and the military) extended to the social sciences as a whole: “For years, government money . . . not always publicly ac‐ knowledgeable as such—made up more than 75 per cent of the annual budgets of institutions such as Paul Lazarsfeld’s Bureau of Applied Social Research at Columbia University, Hadley Cantril’s Institute for International Social Programs at Princeton, Ithiel de Sola Pool’s CENIS [the Center for International Studies, earlier known as CIS] program at MIT, and others.” Official sources in 1952 reported that “fully 96 per cent of all reported [government] funding for social sciences at that time was drawn from the U.S. military.” My own work in postwar U.S. archives over the past two decades has taught me how many books central to the political science profession in the 1950s and 1960s emerged first as internal classified government studies.

38. Ibid., box 13, Smith to Mosely, 28 Feb. 1961; see also notations on Mosely to Smith, 10 Mar. 1961.
40. Ibid., Mosely to King, 17 Apr. 1962.
42. I refer for example to the “Studies in Political Development” series, sponsored by the Committee on Comparative Politics of the Social Science Research Council, yielding by my count seven books, all published by Princeton University Press in the mid‐1960s and all of which became required reading in the political science subfield of comparative politics: Lucian W. Pye, ed., Communications and Political Development, 1967; Joseph LaPalombara, ed., Bureaucracy and Political Development, 1969; Robert Ward and Dankwart Rustow’s Political Modernization in Japan and Turkey, 19XX; James S. Coleman, ed., Education and Political Development, 1966; Joseph LaPalombara and Myron Weiner, eds., Political Parties and Political Development, 1966; Lucian W. Pye and Sidney Verba, eds., Political Culture and Political Development, 1965; Leonard Binder (along with Pye, Coleman, Verba, LaPalombara, and Weiner), eds., Crises and Sequences in Political Development, 1971; and also the Little Brown series in comparative politics edited by Almond, Coleman, and Pye. Gabriel Almond and James S. Coleman authored the ur‐text in this literature, The Politics of the Developing Areas (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1960). Almond also was an academic participant in intelligence projects at the time. Documents in the Max Millikan Papers at MIT show that Almond was a member of the classified “Working Committee on Attitudes toward Unconventional Weapons in 1958–61, along with Air Force Gen. Curtis LeMay, Harvard academic Thomas Schelling, and MIT’s Ethiel de Sola Pool, among others. The committee studied “a variety of types of unconventional weapons, nuclear, biological, and chemical, for use in limited war.” The social scientists were expected to find ways of “minimizing” unfortunate reactions by target peoples to the use of such weapons—or as Millikan put it in his letter to Almond inviting him to join the committee, the committee would discuss measures to be taken that “might reduce to tolerable levels the political disadvantages of the use of a variety of such weapons,” and how to use weapons of mass destruction and still have “the limitability of limited conflict.” (Millikan to Almond, 3 Nov. 1958, Max Millikan Papers, box 8.) Millikan’s long memorandum of 10 Jan. 1961 to the committee stated clearly that use of such weapons might include crop‐destroying agents that would cause general famine; the covert use of this and other unconventional weapons would be accompanied by overt denial that the United States had used them. The key case he mentioned would be use of such weapons against a conventional Chinese attack on a country in Southeast Asia (Millikan Papers, box 8).
43. Simpson, “U.S. Mass Communication Research and Counterinsurgency.” Simpson has long lists of social scientists who worked for the OSS and other intelligence agencies during the war: they include Harold Laswell, Hadley Cantril, Daniel Lerner, Nathan Leites, Heinz Eulau, Elmo Roper, Wilbur Schramm, Clyde Kluckhohn, Edward Shils, Morris Janowitz, and many others; after the war, “a remarkably tight circle of men and women” continued to work for the state, including Laswell, Lerner, Cantril, Janowitz, Kluckhohn, and Eulau.
Allen and Taylor at Washington

The University of Washington in Seattle has one of the oldest area studies centers, with parts of it established well before World War II. But the Cold War transformed it as well, beginning with a case that made headlines all over the country. In January 1949 the Board of Regents of the University of Washington fired three tenured professors for their political views: two because they initially denied and then later admitted membership in the Communist Party, and one—Ralph Grundlach, a national figure in the discipline of psychology—who was not a party member but was a radical who was uncooperative with university and state legislature inquiries. Ellen Shrecker, author of the definitive account of McCarthyism on the campus, wrote that this decision “had nationwide repercussions,” not only as the first important academic freedom case in the Cold War period, but one that also established a model for purges at many universities thereafter. President Raymond B. Allen was the prime mover behind this influential case; Shrecker takes particular note of how careful Allen was to assure that proper academic procedure be followed in all political cases.44

There is no suggestion in Schrecker’s account, however, or in the more detailed study of this case by Jane Sanders,45 that Allen had extensive contact with J. Edgar Hoover and his close aides in the FBI as the case unfolded, or that he was advised by William Donovan on the crucial matter of how to construct a model argument against these professors, one consistent with contemporary doctrines of academic freedom that would stand up in a court of law.46 By far the most disturbing aspects of this case, therefore, begin at the top: not in what this president did in the early Cold War period to protect academic freedom and threatened faculty or to arouse the suspicions of the FBI, but in what he did to facilitate such suspicions and deliver up such faculty.

I came across Donovan’s role in shaping Allen’s argument in the former’s paper,47 but the FBI’s involvement was much greater. For unknown reasons the FBI file on the University of Washington (hereafter UW) is relatively unexpurgated.48 This affair apparently began with President Allen’s request to meet with Hoover or a top assistant in May 194849 to express his concern that the so-called Canwell Committee (Washington state’s early and vicious version of the House Un-American Activities Committee) was not abiding by agreements he had made with it. Allen had instructed UW faculty to assist in Canwell’s investigation, and to speak with Everett Pomeroy, one of Canwell’s chief investigators whom Allen wrongly believed to be a former FBI agent. In return, Allen said, Canwell had agreed to turn over the names of faculty to be hauled before

45. Jane Sanders, Cold War on the Campus: Academic Freedom at the University of Washington, 1946–64 (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1979). In her index he has two entries for J. Edgar Hoover and three for the FBI, none related to the 1949 case.
46. Allen’s influential argument—“soon [to] be embraced by the academic world”—was, in Shrecker’s presentation, ‘that academics “have special obligations” that “involve questions of intellectual honesty and integrity.” Communism, because of its demand for uncritical acceptance of the party’s line, interferes with that quest for truth “which is the first obligation and duty of the teacher.” . . . [Thus] Allen concluded that . . . “by reason of their admitted membership in the Communist Party . . . [the two teachers were] incompetent, intellectually dishonest, and derelict in their duty to teach the truth”’ (ibid., p. 103).

47. See Donovan’s advice to President Allen in the Donovan Papers, box 75A, item 889, handwritten notes dated 3 Feb. 1949 (the advice was given earlier than this date). George Taylor also worked with Allen in devising an effective strategy for firing communists and radicals. See Sanders, Cold War on the Campus, p. 79.
48. See Diamond Papers, box 15.

© BCAS. All rights reserved. For non-commercial use only. www.bcasnet.org
his committee so that the UW could carry out its own internal investigation first and thus avoid public embarrassment.

Allen was also interested in an arrangement that he thought obtained at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), whereby an on-campus FBI representative "cooperates with university officials"; he wished to have a similar arrangement at the University of Washington so that he could get current FBI information on UW faculty, and check the names of potential new faculty with the FBI. Hoover scrawled on this document, "make sure this isn't being done" at UCLA, apparently a comment for the file since the FBI proceeded to set up for Allen what can only be called the arrangement Allen asked for—the one he persistently thought existed at UCLA in spite of FBI denials—one which provided him the information he wanted on UW faculty. By November 1948 an FBI agent was seeing Allen weekly, and Allen in return was giving him privileged information on what the relevant faculty committee and the Board of Regents were likely to do about the suspect professors. Allen even provided the FBI with the entire transcript of the university's internal proceedings, including privileged testimony assumed to be strictly confidential.\[^{26}\]

The evidence suggests that the Ford Foundation, in close consultation with the CIA, helped to shape postwar area studies and important collaborative research in modernization studies and comparative politics that were later mediated through well-known Social Science Research Council projects.

In a case of particular interest to the Korean field at the University of Washington (an area that it has specialized in since 1945), Allen told the FBI that "although Harold Sunoo appeared to be an innocent dupe of the Party, he [Allen] was not entirely satisfied with the information available with respect to Sunoo," and asked for more from the FBI.\[^{27}\] Dr. Sunoo taught at the university in the early Cold War period, and subsequently was forced to resign. Many years later he told me that he thought George Taylor, for decades the director of the Russian and Far Eastern Center at the university, had turned him in to the FBI as a security risk because of his membership in a small faculty group critical of the Syngman Rhee regime.

I later verified that information independently with another Korean employed by the University of Washington at the same time. He had participated in the same group, and he said that Taylor's denunciation of him to the FBI was responsible for getting him fired (from a department having to do with the arts and thus utterly unrelated to any possible security problem). For nearly two decades thereafter he was unable to obtain a passport. Worse happened to other Koreans who were active politically in the United States were deported to South Korea where they were subsequently executed. (FBI files on these cases were closed when I sought access to them several years ago.)

Declassified documents demonstrate that George Taylor did indeed collaborate with the FBI. An example is a conference he helped to organize in 1955 (the same year that, in a celebrated case, the University of Washington canceled a speaking invitation to Robert Oppenheimer\[^{51}\].) At first the conference was to be titled "World Communism and American Policy"; Taylor invited a local FBI agent to attend while assuring him that "there would be no improper interference from the presence of the agent," and offering to synopsize the conference for the FBI. Subsequently the name of the conference was changed to "American Policy and Soviet Imperialism," with conference fliers using verbiage such as the following to invite the public to attend:

DO YOU KNOW that over half your income taxes are due to the aggressive nature of Communist imperialism?

DO YOU KNOW what Lenin and Stalin intended regarding world domination?

DO YOU KNOW the kinds of private American Cold War operations and what they are doing?\[^{52}\]

One only begins to understand the early Cold War period by learning that Taylor and his colleague Karl Wittfogel were also attacked as left-wingers or communist sympathizers by right-wing groups who noted Wittfogel's past communist affiliations and Taylor's presence alongside China-hand John Service in the Office of War Information and Taylor's membership in the Institute of Pacific Relations. President Allen chose to stand by them, however, and shortly afterwards Allen accepted the directorship of the Psychological Strategy Board, a CIA position executed. (FBI files on these cases were closed when I sought access to them several years ago.)

50. Diamond Papers, box 15, Seattle FBI to Director, FBI, 26 Jan. 1949. Allen met with Hoover on 6 May, and made several subsequent visits to the FBI in 1948 and 1949. According to Clyde Tolson's memo to Nichols of 19 May 1948, a Los Angeles FBI agent named Hood had no special relationship with the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), but was "personally friendly with the Dean and just a few days ago the Dean wrote him regarding an individual and wanted certain information. ..." The memo says Hood didn't give him the information. When President Allen later asked the local FBI agent responsible for contacts at the UW to furnish information on six professors, however, Tolson told the agent to give it to him (see Tolson to Nichols, 21 June 1948). Allen also asked the FBI for information on Melvin Rader, a stalwart radical whom I remember from when I taught at the UW, and who was never accused of being a member of the Communist Party—although as FBI information shows, Allen told the FBI he thought Rader was "closely connected with the Communist Party"—while offering no evidence. Later it developed that the Canwell Committee had faked evidence on Rader (Sanders, Cold War on Campus, p. 86).

51. Ibid., Seattle FBI to Director, FBI, 8 June 1955; Seattle FBI to Director, FBI, 24 Aug. 1955. The invited conference guests included representatives from the State Department, the Voice of America, and Radio Free Europe; Alex Inkeles was a featured speaker, as were Taylor and historian Donald Treadgold.
Graduate Dara O’Rourke unfurling a banner after receiving his diploma at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) ’s commencement exercises in June 1989. In the early 1950s the CIA underwrote MIT’s Center for International Studies, almost as a subsidiary enterprise. But this was only a beginning, and only one aspect of MIT’s involvement with the U.S. government and military. In May 1985, for example, the Pentagon earmarked $70 million annually for Star Wars research at the school. This photo is by Michael Franklin, and it accompanied Rich Cowan’s “Cap and Gown as Camouflage,” CovertAction Information Bulletin, no. 38 (fall 1991), pp. 50–52.

Taylor had turned down in 1950.44 (Once again one senses that in this period you either consulted with the CIA or got investigated by the FBI.)

Nikolai Poppe also taught for decades at the University of Washington. Originally a specialist on Mongolia, he defected from the USSR to the Nazis on the first day they arrived in his town in 1942, and “actively collaborated” with the quisling government in the Karachai minority region in the Caucasus—the first acts of which consisted of expropriating Jewish property, followed by a general roundup of Jews for gassing. He later worked at the Nazis’ notorious Wannsee Institute in Berlin, identifying ethnic peoples of the USSR and Eastern Europe. He was picked up after the war first by British intelligence, and then by U.S. intelligence as part of Operation Bloodstone to make use of Nazis who might aid the United States in the developing Cold War struggle.

Poppe was brought to the United States in 1949 as part of the area studies program described above that was presided over by John Davies and George Kennan. Placed first in Harvard’s Russian Research Center (where sociologist Talcott Parsons was his big backer), he soon went to the University of Washington. There George Taylor introduced him to Benjamin Mandel—the chief investigator for the House Un-American Activities Committee, and later for the subsequent McCarran inquisition of the China field; Mandel at the time was preparing a perjury indictment against Owen Lattimore. None of this came out at the time of Poppe’s testimony against Lattimore, and Lattimore’s role in blocking a U.S. visa for Poppe until 1949 on the grounds that he had been a Nazi SS officer also remained unknown.55

Perhaps the most disappointing aspect of the new SSRC/ACLS restructuring and the apparent new direction of the major foundations, is the absence of any reference to the basic motivation for so many of the new tendencies in the 1990s world that they hope to adapt themselves to, namely, the global corporation.

International Studies during the Cold War

“International studies” has been a more muddled field than area studies, although for many the two labels are synonymous.56 One can count on most members of area programs to have competence in those areas, but international studies is such a grab bag that almost any subject or discipline that crosses international boundaries can qualify for inclusion. The annual meetings of the International Studies Association have an extraordinary range of panels, with political scientists predominating but with a profusion of disciplines and subfields typically represented on the program. It is anything and everything, perhaps with a bias toward international relations

---

54. Sanders, Cold War on Campus, p. 94.
55. Simpson, Blowback, pp. 118–22; Robert P. Newman, Owen Lattimore and the ‘Loss’ of China (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1992), pp. 363–64. On Taylor’s introduction to Mandel, see Diamond, Compromised Campus, p. 308. (Poppe has always denied that he was an SS officer, saying that as a foreigner he could not have joined the SS; he also claimed that his “research” had nothing to do with the “final solution”—which was announced at a conference in Wannsee in January 1942 by SS leader Reinhard Heydrich, with Adolph Eichmann in attendance. See Simpson, Blowback, p. 48n.)
56. See, for example, Richard D. Lambert, Points of Leverage: An Agenda for a National Foundation for International Studies (New York: Social Science Research Council, 1986).
work and fine scholars to hack work and charlatans. The CIA. This is evident in the transcript of a visiting committee meeting at MIT in May 1959, attended by MIT faculty like W. W. Rostow, Ithiel de Sola Pool, Max Millikan, and James Killian (president of MIT for several years); the visitors included Robert Lovett, McGeorge Bundy, and several unidentified participants.

Queried as to whether the center served just the CIA or a larger group of government departments, Millikan remarked that over the five years of the center’s relationship with the CIA, “there has been some continuing ambiguity as to whether we were creatures of [the] CIA or whether [the] CIA was acting as an administrative office for other agencies.” He also admitted that the center had “taken on projects under pressure” to have work done that the CIA wanted done (these were among “the least successful projects” from MIT’s standpoint, he thought). At one point in the transcript Millikan also says that “[Allen] Dulles allowed us to hire three senior people,” suggesting that the CIA director had a hand in CENIS’s hiring policies. The center provided an important go-between or holding area for the CIA, since “top notch social scientists” and “area experts” had no patience for extended periods of residence at CIA headquarters: “A center like ours provides a way of getting men in academic work to give them [sic] a close relationship with concrete problems faced by people in government.”

This transcript predictably shows that the two big objects of such work were the Soviet Union and China, with various researchers associated with the center doing internal classified reports that subsequently became published books—for example Rostow’s *Dynamics of Soviet Society*. The primary impetus for this, of course, was the professorial desire to “get a book out of it.” But Millikan also noted another motivation: “In an academic institution it is corrosive to have people who are supposed to be pursuing knowledge and teaching people under limitations as to whom they can talk to and what they can talk about.” One way to remedy that problem was to take on no project “whose material we can’t produce in some unclassified results [sic].” McGeorge Bundy, however, thought that the value of classified work was not in its “magnitude” or in the number of books produced, but in the connection itself: “The channel is more important than that a lot of water should be running through it.” Lovett acknowledged that there could be “very damaging publicity” if it were known that the CIA was funding and using CENIS, since the CIA provided “a good whipping board;” he thought they could set up a “fire wall” by making the National Security Council (NSC) “our controlling agent with [the] CIA the administrative agent.” Killian responded that “I have a strange animal instinct that this is a good time to get ourselves tidied up. We shouldn’t take the risk on this.” Another participant named McCormack said he had always thought “that others would front [for] the CIA;” a participant named Jackson said that the NSC could be “a wonderful cover.” In the midst of this discussion (which recalls Hollywood versions of Mafia palaver), card-carrying “Wise Man” Robert Lovett provided the bottom line: “If this thing can be solved you will find it easier to get more money from the foundations.”

**Area and International Studies after the Cold War**

Perhaps there is enough detail above to convince independent observers that several major U.S. centers of area and international studies research came precisely from the state/intelligence/foundation nexus that critics said they did in the late 1960s, always to a hailstorm of denial then, always to a farrago of “why does this surprise you?” today. CIA-connected faculty were so influential in the 1960s that they made critics who stood for academic principle look like wild-eyed radicals, if today critics merely appear to have been naifs who didn’t know what was going on.

If we now fast forward to the 1990s we find that the first proponents of the state’s need for area training and expertise (to meet the challenges of the post–Cold War era, and so on) decided to put the intelligence function front and center, with a requirement that recipients of government fellowships consult with the national security agencies of the same government as a quid pro quo for their funding. I refer, of course, to the National Security Education Act (NSEA), also known as the Boren Bill, after former senator David Boren. Several area associations went on record in opposition to this program, and it nearly fell beneath Newt Gingrich’s budget-cutting ax in 1995.

In a useful summary of the issues that scholars raised about the NSEA, the administrator in charge of the program in 1992, Martin Hurwitz (whose background is in the Defense Intelligence Agency, an outfit that makes the CIA look liberal by
Each of those three organizations had extant resolutions on their books urging members not to participate in defense-related research programs. The NSEA was not completely “aboveboard,” however, since its public board was supplemented by a “shadow board,” and some complained that “aboveboard” was not quite descriptive of the Defense Intelligence College that was to house the NSEA. They thus hoped to find non-Pentagon housing and call the new office “The David L. Boren Center for International Studies,” but with no substantive changes otherwise. On 14 February 1992 three area associations (not including the Association for Asian Studies) wrote to Senator Boren expressing worries about “even indirect links to U.S. national security agencies.” Each of those three organizations had extant resolutions on their books urging members not to participate in defense-related research programs.

On 14 February 1992 three area associations (not including the Association for Asian Studies) wrote to Senator Boren expressing worries about “even indirect links to U.S. national security agencies.” Each of those three organizations had extant resolutions on their books urging members not to participate in defense-related research programs.

The secretary-treasurer of the AAS, L. A. Peter Gosling, introduced the issue to the membership as follows: “The goal of our continued discussions about and with the NSEA [sic—he refers to discussions with Martin Hurwitz] has been to make it as useful and acceptable to the scholarly community as possible, which in turn involves insulating it as much as possible from the Department of Defense where it is funded and located” [my emphasis].

Gosling went on to fret that “there are no [sic] other sources now, nor in the immediate-future” for funding international or area studies, and that although the NSEA only supplemented Title VI funding, “there are those who fear that the traditional Defense Department/intelligence community whose support has so often saved Title VI funding from extinction may [now] be less motivated to do so.” Gosling thought the program would benefit Asian studies at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, and noted that all Asian languages were included in the NSEA’s list of priority languages (and isn’t that wonderful, and so on). Even though the NSE Board “sets the priorities for the program,” this can be mitigated by “the use of re-grant organizations” in administering parts of the program, such as perhaps the Fulbright program; such modalities might enable an escape from Defense Department control. Gosling closed his statement by saying that the AAS has “made clear the desirability of distancing this program from Department of Defense design and control.”

At least three major area associations (for the Middle East, Latin America, and Africa) refused participation in this program, as we have seen. Anne Betteridge, an officer of the Middle East Studies Association, argued that “academic representatives do not wish to obscure the source of funding, but do wish to assure the integrity of academic processes.” Others commented that some academics worry that students in the program “may appear to be spies-in-training,” and that the program would compromise field research in many countries around the world: “Area scholars are extremely sensitive to the damage that can be done to their personal reputations and to their ability to conduct scholarship abroad when they come to be perceived as involved with intelligence or defense agencies of the U.S. government.”

A fair reading of these statements, it seems to me, suggests that Betteridge and the area associations from Latin America, Africa, and the Middle East raised important objections to the NSEA, whereas the secretary-treasurer of the Association for Asian Studies seemed concerned primarily with (1) getting the money, (2) showing AAS members how important the NSEA would be for Asian studies, and (3) evincing no concern whatever for the “traditional clandestine tradecraft” that makes “re-granting agencies” mere window dressing—perhaps because of a different “tradition” in Asian studies: that of intelligence-agency support for Title VI funding, a tradition that I, for one, had never heard about.

Important changes have also come to SSRC and ACLS in the 1990s. These organizations have been the national joint administrative nexus of U.S. academic research since the 1930s. SSRC has not been a center of social science research as most social scientists would define it (the Survey Research Center at Michigan, for example, would come much closer), but a point at which the existing disciplines find meeting ground with “area studies.” (Over the years I have walked on that ground many times myself, as a member of various SSRC committees and working groups.) As such, of course, it is a more important organization than any of the area associations. Therefore we can hearken to how the SSRC vice-president, Stanley J. Heginbotham, appraised the NSEA.46

First, he welcomed it by saying that “new forms of federal support for higher education” have been “extremely difficult to mobilize” in the recent period of spending cuts, budget deficits, and the like. Senator Boren, he explained, wanted the NSEA to facilitate area studies education at the graduate and undergraduate levels, and had hoped the program would be part of an independent governmental foundation. However, the Office of Management and Budget blocked this, and instead ruled that for defense funds to be disbursed for the NSEA under the 1992 Intelligence Authorization Act it would have to be located in the Department of Defense. Heginbotham added in a footnote that Boren decided to further strengthen


64. Ibid., pp. 17–23.
“the credibility of the program in academic circles” by putting the administration of the program under the Defense Intelligence College; “few observers were reassured by this provision,” Heginbotham wrote, but the Defense Intelligence College retained what he called a “nominal” role in the program.

Heginbotham expressed particular concern about “merit review” provisions in the NSEA: “the academic and scholarly communities need firm assurance that selection processes will be free from political or bureaucratic interference beyond assuring compliance with terms of reference. . . . It would not seem acceptable [my emphasis], for example, to have candidates screened on the basis of their political views . . . [or] their ability to obtain security clearances . . . .”

Heginbotham went on to recommend that grants to individuals be made by “independent panels of scholars,” and that the academics on the “oversight board” be selected by a means “transparently independent” of the state agencies making up the same board. But “most worrisome,” Heginbotham wrote, were the service requirements of the NSEP. He described the postgrant requirements for individuals as follows:

Finally, the legislation includes important but ambiguous “service” requirements for individuals who receive funds. . . . Undergraduates receiving scholarships covering periods in excess of one year, as well as all individuals receiving graduate training awards, are required either to serve in the field of education of or in government service for a period between one and three times the length of the award. The legislation also prohibits any department, agency, or entity of the U.S. government that engages in intelligence activities from using any recipient of funds from the program to undertake any activity on its behalf while the individual is being supported by the program.

Heginbotham suggested that the postgrant term be limited to a year, and limited not just to positions in “government and education,” but enabling any employment that used the training to benefit the nation’s international needs.

Heginbotham’s analysis is similar to Gosling’s in three respects, but superior in others: first, the analysis and recommendations are almost entirely procedural; neither Heginbotham nor Gosling defend independent academic inquiry as essential in itself, or international and area studies as important apart from what the state (let alone the “intelligence community”) may want. Both also leave the impression that any funds of such size are ipso facto worth having, regardless of provenance, assuming that the procedures can be “as good as possible” in Heginbotham’s words. And, of course, the guarantees that Heginbotham asks for have not only been routinely bypassed and used as a cover by the state and area studies academics that we examined above, but even powerful Senators complain that the very “oversight” committees responsible for monitoring the CIA have been ignored and subverted—especially in the most recent period (I refer mainly to the revelations of the “Iran/Contra” scandal and the murders of Americans by CIA-associated militarists in Central America).

The SSRC’s Heginbotham, however, seems both more responsible and more concerned than the AAS’s Gosling about “re-granting agencies” being little more than laundries for Department of Defense funding; his calls for merit review, academic independence, recognition of the difference between scholarship and government “service,” and so on, would seem to be basic principles for any kind of fund raising, and were the ones I observed in action on several SSRC committees. Heginbotham should be praised for enunciating them again—even if few seem to be listening, as sources in South Korea, Taiwan, and Japan have become major funders of Asian studies in this country, usually without proper peer and merit review.

Still, the same principles did little to hold back the proliferation of CIA-service faculty and students during the early years of the Cold War.

The *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars* (BCAS) has provided periodic coverage of the NSEA, whereas (so far as I can tell) the other alternative journal in the field—*positions: east Asia cultural critique*—has been silent. In 1992 Mark Selden argued correctly in *BCAS* that the NSEA “poses anew the issue of scholarship and power that lay behind the origin” of the Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars and its *Bulletin*, and noted that unlike earlier such activities, this one “saw no reason to conceal the military and intelligence priorities and powers shaping the field.” *BCAS* drew particular attention to article 3 of the “purposes” section of the NSEA, which call for it “to produce an increased pool of applicants for work in the departments and agencies of the U.S. Government with national security responsibilities.” *BCAS* also noted the similarity between the issues posed by the NSEA and those that the Columbia chapter of CCAS took up in regard to the contemporary China committee of SSRC in a controversial set of articles in 1971.

As a graduate student I participated in preparing that report, the main author of which was Moss Roberts. We were interested in Ford Foundation funding of the China field, SSRC’s Joint Committee on Contemporary China (JCCC), and an organization formed in the State Department in 1964 to coordinate government and private area studies research, the Foreign Areas Research Coordinating Group (FAR). From our inquiry it appeared that FAR played a role in shaping the field of contemporary Chinese studies in line with the state’s needs and with Ford Foundation funding. It did this by suggesting appropriate research and dissertation subjects, in the hope that, together with Ford funding, the expertise of the government’s China-watching apparatus would be enhanced (with obvious benefits also to China watchers in academe).

We were able to establish that FAR had grown out of the army’s concern for the “coordination of behavioral and social

---


In 1992 Mark Selden pointed out in BCAS that the 1991 National Security Education Act proposed by Senator David Boren "poses anew the issue of scholarship and power that lay behind the origin" of the Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars and its Bulletin, but that unlike earlier such activities this one "saw no reason to conceal the military and intelligence priorities and powers shaping the field." In fact, the bill clearly states that its purpose is "to produce an increased pool of applicants for work in the departments and agencies of the U.S. Government with national security responsibilities." This drawing is from the Liberation News Service and previously appeared in BCAS, vol. 3, nos. 3-4 (summer-fall 1971), p. 168, and again in vol. 21, nos. 2-4 (April-December 1989), p. 115.

science" in and out of government, which had long been sponsored by the Special Operations Research Office of Johns Hopkins University. FAR had been in contact with JCCC, which had been one of many beneficiaries of the Ford Foundation's decision to reconstitute the China field. Our report also drew attention to the first chair of JCCC, George Taylor of the University of Washington, who, we argued, was a partisan in the McCarthy-McCarran inquisition, which had nearly destroyed the China field. Taylor testified together with two of his colleagues Wittfogel and Poppe against Owen Lattimore—and therefore a strange choice to preside over a committee hoping to heal wounds and reconstitute the field. We questioned as well why non-China scholars like Philip Mosely were included on the first JCCC.

The report brought a vituperative response from John Fairbank of Harvard, a response that evokes in me today the same emotions it did in 1971: it was a political attack, designed to ward off such inquiries rather than to provide a sincere and honest response to the many questions of fact that we raised. He began by saying our report "raises an issue of conspiracy rather than an issue of values," and ended by accusing us of offering "striking parallels to the McCarran Committee investigation," that is, we were left-McCarthyites. In between, precious few of our questions were answered. Ultimately a precise specification of the relationship to and responsiveness of FAR and JCCC to government or intelligence agendas could not be judged in the absence of access to classified materials. But the issues are strikingly similar to those raised by the NSEA today.

In November 1994 the cunning of history gave us the "Gingrich Revolution," and a chain saw approach to cutting budgets: thus the NSEA appeared to get what it deserved, namely, a quick burial. No doubt Newt thought the NSEA was just another boondoggle for academia (and maybe he was right). At first Congress cut all its funds, but then restored some of them—or so it seems, since NSEA scholarships were again available to students in early 1996. Still, the NSEA is limping along into the post-Gingrich era.

If government funding for area studies seems to be drying up, so is that from foundations. One result is the contemporary restructuring of the Social Science Research Council. For forty years SSRC and ACLS committees have been defined mostly by area: the Joint Committee on . . . China, or Latin America, or Western Europe; there were eleven such committees as of early 1996. That is all changing now under a major restructuring plan. SSRC has justified this effort by reference to the global changes and challenges of the post-Cold War era, the

69. Ibid., p. 127.
70. Ibid., p. 105.
71. I have seen drafts of the restructuring plan and some of the various Joint Committee responses, all dated in late 1995 and early 1996, but cannot cite the documents under the terms of their provision to me; this is not because of secrecy so much as the provisional and evolving nature of the restructuring itself as SSRC administrators respond to suggestions and complaints about their new plans. I will also refer to Kenneth Prewitt's "Presidential Items," in the March 1996 issue of the SSRC's newsletter, Items, which reflect the essence of the restructuring drafts I have seen.
“boundary displacements” that I began this article with. These include (1) a desire to move away from fixed regional identities (that is, the area committees), given that globalization has made the “areas’ more porous, less bounded, less fixed” than previously thought; (2) to utilize area expertise to understand pressing issues in the world that transcend particular countries, which is the real promise of area studies in the post-1989 era; (3) to reintroduce area knowledge to social science disciplines that increasingly seem to believe that they can get along without it (this is an implicit reference to the rational choice paradigm and to “formal theory” in economics, sociology, and political science), (4) to integrate the United States into “area studies” by recognizing it as an “area” that needs to be studied comparatively, and (5) to collapse the SSRC and ACLS projects themselves, given the increasing cross-fertilization between the social sciences and the humanities. (I do not know if the restructuring will actually yield just one organization, but refer only to the justifications I have seen for the new plans).

Major funding organizations like the Mellon Foundation and the Ford Foundation have recently made clear their declining support for area studies and their desire to have cross-regional scholarship, so in that subtly coercive context item 1 in this plan becomes obligatory (some say that SSRC has been teetering on the edge of bankruptcy for several years). Item 2 is no different from the original justification for area studies. Items 3 and 4 are laudable, however, for someone conversant with the daily life of the social sciences in U.S. universities in the 1980s and 1990s.

Rational choice theory is the academic analogue of the “free market” principles that Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan represented in the 1980s, and that are now offered to the “world without boundaries” as the only possible paradigm of economic development. Like the putative free market, “rational choice” collapses the diversity of the human experience into one category, the self-interested individualist prototype that has animated and totalized the economics profession in the United States. As this paradigm now proposes to colonize political science and sociology, it has no use for (and indeed views with deep hostility) anyone who happens to know something about a “foreign area,” or, for that matter, the United States: they are all threats to the universality of this model, which can explain everything from how Japanese Diet members control the Ministry of Finance to why Indian widows throw themselves onto funeral pyres—with every explanation contingent on the listener knowing little or nothing about the subject itself.

So-called formal theory takes the rational choice paradigm one step further: if “soft” rational choice seeks to verify the claims of its model empirically through the collection and testing of data, the estimation of regression coefficients, and the like, “formal theory” is a simpler matter of the researcher staring at the game-theoretic mathematical formulas that appear on the computer screen, thus to determine how the real world works. If the theory does not explain political, social, or economic phenomena, it is the real world’s fault.

The rise of the rational choice and formal theory paradigms of social science inquiry has put at risk the subfields of economic history, historical sociology, and comparative politics, and the entire area studies project. Why do you need to know Japanese or anything about Japan’s history and culture if the methods of rational choice will explain why Japanese politicians and bureaucrats do the things they do?72 If some recalcitrant research problems nonetheless still require access to Chinese or Swahili, why not get what you need from a graduate student fluent in those languages, rather than an academic expert on China or Africa? The “soft” rational choice practitioner may in fact have language and area training, or if not, will still find value in the work of area specialists; they are the spelunkers who descend into the mysterious cave to mine a lode of “facts,” which the practitioner will then interpret from a superior theoretical vantage point. The formal theorist, however, has no use for either of them.

Item 4 proposes to turn the United States into an “area,” and were it ever to succeed it would also transform the disciplines. Research on the United States is indeed an “area study” just like any other; but then it’s our country and has all manner of idiosyncrasy and detail that the nonexpert or outsider could never possibly understand—and following upon that insight you arrive at the dominance of Americanists in almost any history, political science, or sociology department. That they might be as blithely ignorant of how the world beyond U.S. borders influences the things they study as any South Asian area specialist makes no dent on their departmental power. Much more importantly, the ancient injunction to “know thyself” and the doctrine that there is no “thing in itself,” makes comparative study obligatory. So, to have a “Joint Committee on the United States” under the SSRC/ACLS rubric would be a big step forward.

Kenneth Prewitt, president of SSRC, wrote that for all the aforesaid reasons, and no doubt others that I am not aware of, SSRC/ACLS has come to believe “that a number of discrete and separated ‘area committees,’ each focused on a single world region, is not the optimum structure for providing new insights and theories suitable for a world in which the geographic units of analysis are neither static nor straightforward.”74 Instead of eleven committees, the new plan will apparently have three, under the following general rubrics: area studies and regional analysis; area studies and comparative analysis; area studies and global analysis. There may also be a fourth committee designed to support and replenish the existing scholarly infrastructure in the United States, and to develop similar structures in various other parts of the world. Nonetheless Prewitt still envisions an important function for area specialists: “... if scholarship is not rooted in place-specific histories and cultures, it will miss, widely, the nuances that allow us to make sense of such phenomena as international labor flows, conflicting perspectives on human rights... [and so on].”75

As this restructuring project got off the ground (before Prewitt became president in 1996), the SSRC’s Heginbotham

---

72. Prewitt, ibid., p. 15.
74. Prewitt, “Presidential Items,” p. 16.
75. Ibid.
sought to justify it by referring to the unfortunate Cold War shaping of area studies in the early postwar period, and the need for “rethinking international scholarship” now that the Cold War is over.⁷⁶ This odd return of repressed knowledge stimulated a sharp response: several scholars associated with Soviet and Slavic studies weighed in to deny that political pressures deriving from the Cold War agenda of U.S. foreign policy had much effect on their field, which often produced scholarship “strikingly independent of assumptions driving U.S. political preferences.” Various area institutes may have been formed “partially in response to the Cold War,” but nonetheless were able to conduct scholarship “without compromising their academic integrity.” The authors also argued that the new SSRC framework “. . . will tear international scholarship from the rich, textured empirical base that has been assiduously developed through decades of research, moving it instead to a nebulus ‘global’ framework for research.”⁷⁷

This is a nice statement of the likely outcome of the current SSRC/ACLS restructuring, but as we have seen Heginbotham is clearly right about the state’s role in shaping the study of “foreign areas;” honest and independent scholarship was possible in the early area institutes, but the academic integrity of the institutes themselves was compromised by a secret and extensive network of ties to the CIA and the FBI. It is a bit much, of course, for SSRC to acknowledge this only now by way of justifying its new course, when it spent all too much time in the 1960s and 1970s denying that the state had any influence on its research programs.⁷⁸ More important, however, is the contemporary denial of the same thing, and here SSRC’s critics had a point.

If the current U.S. administration has one “doctrine,” it is a Clinton doctrine of promoting U.S.-based global corporations and U.S. exports through the most activist foreign economic policy of any president in history. Clinton’s achievements in this respect—the North American Free Trade Association (NAFTA), the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the new World Trade Organization, and many other alphabet-soup organizations, and the routine daily use of the state apparatus to further the export goals of U.S. multinationals—are all justified by buzzwords that crop up in the new SSRC plans: a world without borders, increasing globalization, the wonders of the Internet and the World Wide Web, the growth of multiculturalism, the resulting intensification of subnational loyalties and identities, and so on. Furthermore the SSRC drafts of its restructuring plan make clear the concern not just for scholarship, but for policy relevance and encouraging better capacities for “managing” the new global issues of the 1990s—a clear rationale for scholarship and “area expertise” to be at the service of national security bureaucrats.

I am by no means a purist on these matters, and see nothing particularly wrong with scholars offering their views on policy questions so long as the practice is not openly or subtly coerced by funding agencies and does not require security clearances (as the NSEA clearly does). The post-1960s SSRC, in my limited experience, has managed the nexus where state power and scholarship meet about as well as could be expected, assuming that there is some necessity to do it in the first place if the organization hopes to be funded as a national organizer of social science research; many SSRC research projects and even a couple of its joint committees (notably the Latin American group) have had clear counterhegemonic agendas, and produced scholarship of enormous relevance to political struggles around the world.⁷⁹

The SSRC/ACLS area committees have also been fertile ground for interdisciplinary scholarship: for decades they offered a rare venue where one could see what a historian thought of the work of an economist, or what a literary critic thought of behavioralist sociology. Meanwhile my own experience in the university has led me to understand that an “area specialist” is as unwanted in the totalized world of Friedmanite economics as a zek (Gulag resident) would be at a meeting of Stalin and Beria. To the extent that the more diverse discipline of political science has produced any lasting knowledge about the world beyond our shores, it has almost always been done through the contributions of area specialists to the subfields of comparative politics and international relations.⁸⁰

In 1994 Northwestern University won a grant from the Mellon Foundation to run two year-long interdisciplinary seminars in the hope that they would bridge the areas and the disciplines. I participated in writing that grant proposal, and in 1995–96 directed the first seminar, “The Cultural Construction of Human Rights and Democracy.” The results of this effort are not yet completely in, but it seems to me that this funding succeeded in providing a useful and important forum for interdisciplinary work, getting people to talk to one another across areas and disciplines, and I hope that the book growing out of it will be valuable. To the extent that the Mellon Foundation views such seminars as an addition to the funding of existing area programs, they are wonderful. To the extent that they represent a redirection of funding away from area studies, the seminars are no substitute for the training of people who know the languages and civilizations of particular places. You win with people, as football coach Woody Hayes used to say, and had there not been people already steeped in the

---


---

⁷⁸. Heginbotham wrote: “those who shaped the emerging institutions of international scholarship in the early years of the Cold War should have been more attentive to a range of issues involving the autonomy and integrity of scholars and scholarly institutions.” The response of Huber, Ruble, and Stavrakis to this truth was to ask Heginbotham to name names: “Which individuals were inattentive to scholarly autonomy and integrity?” they ask, since such people should have “an opportunity to defend themselves.”


⁸⁰. Heginbotham’s critics refer to “the damage done by the exceptionally strong behavioral wave that swept through the social sciences in America thirty years ago,” but the damage has been at least as great from the rational choice wave of the 1980s.
The top 358 billionaires are worth the combined income of 45% of the planet’s population, the 2.5 billion people on the bottom.

With the end of the Cold War, U.S. government/intelligence priorities have focused much more openly on what has probably been the underlying priority all along: protecting U.S. interests and power in the world. A major part of this is promoting U.S.-based global corporations and exports, with the free market “world without borders” as the accepted paradigm for economic development. For U.S. research institutions supporting government/intelligence priorities this involves collapsing the diversity of human experience into an assumed universal self-interested desire for material development. Even without the Cold War, then, there is a need to separate academic and government functions so that there can be truly free inquiry and opinions, with the opportunity to explore a diversity of paradigms. This drawing is by and courtesy of Matt Wuerker and is from a 1996 subscription appeal for the CovertAction Quarterly (Washington, D.C.).

regions we studied, inventing them would have been impossible—or at least forbiddingly expensive.

In one of the SSRC restructuring plans there is this sentence: “There is no making sense of the world by those ignorant of local context-specific issues; and there is no making sense of the world by those indifferent to cross-regional and global forces.” I think this is true, even if I would phrase the point differently. Although “area programs” trained many scholars and made possible a rare interdisciplinary intellectual program, the sad fact is that most area specialists were not interested in it. There is no reason, of course, why a person working on Chinese oracle bones should have anything in common with an expert on the Chinese Communist politburo; their common habitus in a Chinese studies program was the result of a historical compromise between the universities and the state in the early Cold War period. In return for not complaining about the predominance of Kremlinologists or specialists in communist politics, the oracle bone or Sanskrit or Hinduism specialist got a tenured sinecure and (usually) a handful of students in his or her classes. The state, the foundations, and the universities supported scholars who spent their entire lives translating the classics of one culture or another into English, often with next to no interaction with their colleagues. Many were precisely as monkish and unyielding to the intellectual life outside their narrow discipline as a microeconomist. I have never thought it too much to ask that a person like this find something to teach that would attract enough students into the classroom to pay the bills, but it happens all the time, and now the area studies programs are paying the price; often representing enormous sunk costs, the faculty and the sinecures are very expensive now and unlikely to be sustained at anything like current levels in the future. If we end up having no Sanskrit, no Urdu, no oracle bones, and no Han Dynasty history, it will not just owe to the ignorance
of the foundations, the government, and the university administrators, but will also reflect the past privilege of the hidebound narrow scribblers themselves.

Perhaps the most disappointing aspect of the new SSRC/ACLS restructuring and the apparent new direction of the major foundations is the absence of any reference to the basic motivation for so many of the new tendencies in the 1990s world that they hope to adapt themselves to, namely, the global corporation. 81 This is the motive force and modal organization for “globalization” and the technologies that speed it. Bill Gates’s Microsoft is as dominant in this new sphere as John D. Rockefeller’s Standard Oil was a century ago; and no doubt our grandchildren will vote for various governors and senators, if not presidents, named Gates—and the ones who become academics will go to the “Gates Foundation” for their research grants. Another symbolic U.S. corporation, Coca Cola, has become the first U.S. multinational to place overall corporate management in the hands of its world office rather than at its historic national center in Atlanta. In that sense, SSRC is merely following Coca Cola’s lead by making the United States of America just another subsidiary, just another “area committee.” All the globally competitive U.S. corporations are all-out for multiculturalism, multi-ethnic staffs, a world without borders and the latest high technology no matter what its impact on human beings, something evident in their media advertising: “Oil for the Lamps of China” may have been Standard Oil’s slogan for selling kerosene worldwide, but now Michael Jordan as the high-flying, globe-trotting logo for Nike might as well be the logo for the United States, Inc. (Jordan and his Chicago Bulls are particularly popular in “Communist China”—just as they are in my household.)

This is not a matter of SSRC raising a challenge to the global corporation, which is hardly to be expected, but it is a matter of not abandoning hard-won scholarly knowledge and resources that we already have—and here I am not speaking simply of the existing area programs. Because of the ferment of the 1960s, social science scholarship of the 1970s met a high standard of quality and relevance. In political science, sociology, and even to some extent economics, political economy became a rubric under which scholars produced a large body of work on the multinational corporation, the global monetary system, the world pool of labor, peripheral dependency, and U.S. hegemony itself. A high point of this effort was Immanuel Wallerstein’s multivolume Modern World-System, but there were many others.

I would say that one of the shocks of my adult life was to see the alacrity with which many social scientists abandoned this political economy program, especially since the abandonment seemed roughly coterminal with the arrival of the Reagan and Thatcher administrations. Often the very social scientists who produced serious scholarship in political economy in the 1970s became the leaders of a march into the abstractions of rational choice and formal theory in the 1980s. One of the SSRC committees that sought to sustain this 1970s agenda was the States and Social Structures Committee (my bias since I was a member); it was summarily eliminated by a new SSRC president in 1991. Be that as it may, there remains a fine body of work in U.S. political economy that could be the basis for a revival of scholarship on the global corporation and the political economy of the world that it creates before our eyes.

Conclusion

What is to be done? Immanuel Wallerstein recently offered some useful, modest suggestions, which I fully support: encourage interdisciplinary work by requiring faculty to reside in two departments, bring faculty together for a year’s work around broad themes, reexamine the epistemological underpinnings of the social sciences in the light of the eclipse of the Newtonian paradigm in the hard sciences, and reinvent a university structure so that it is no longer strongly shaped by the conditions of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. 82 I have some additional modest suggestions, in the interest of continuing discussion and debate:

1. Abolish the social sciences and group them under one heading: political economy (if economics will not go along, connect it to the business school).

2. Regroup area studies programs around a heterodox collection of themes that allow us all to stand “off center” 83 from our native home and the (foreign?) object of our scholarly desires.

3. Raise funds for academic work on the basis of the corporate identity of the university as that place where, for once, adults do not have to sell their souls to earn their bread, but can learn, write, produce knowledge, and teach the young as their essential contribution to the larger society.

4. Abolish the CIA, and get the intelligence and military agencies out of free academic inquiry.

If we began this article with McGeorge Bundy, it is best to close it with words from one of the few scholars to speak out against the FBI purge in the early postwar period—and for his efforts to suffer his due measure of obsessive FBI attention: historian Bernard A. DeVoto. In 1949 he wrote words as appropriate to that era as for the “National Security Education Act” and the “globalized” world of today:

The colleges . . . have got to say: on this campus all books, all expression, all inquiry, all opinions are free. They have got to maintain that position against the government and everyone else. If they don’t, they will presently have left nothing that is worth having. 84

81. Also noteworthy is the similarity between the rhetoric of globalization that Ken Prewitt uses to justify the new SSRC course, and that used a decade ago by Richard Lambert in his Points of Leverage (for which Prewitt wrote the preface; see for example pp. 1–2, 7, 27–31). “Globalization” may be the new mantra, but maneuvering to find ways to meet the needs of our global corporations is getting old by now.


83. I use Masao Miyoshi’s phrase in his Off Center (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), suggestive of a stance placing the scholar neither in his native country nor on the ground he studies, but in a place “off center,” yielding a parallax view essential to new knowledge—about anything. Miyoshi made his scholarly reputation as a literary critic of Elizabethan novels, and now writes about Japan (and the United States) with a rare insight born of a rare experience.

84. Quoted in Diamond, Compromised Campus, p. 43.
Area Studies and the National Security State

by James K. Boyce*

During the Cold War a deep rift emerged in the United States between the government's national security agencies and their critics. Most critics were not pro-Soviet. Nor did they deny that security, properly construed, is a legitimate national concern. Their critique was founded instead on the observation that the U.S. government, in the name of national security, systematically and often brutally opposed popular movements in the so-called Third World for social justice, democracy, and more equitable economic arrangements. The domestic corollaries of this foreign policy included McCarthyism and the pall it subsequently cast over intellectual and political life.

Bruce Cumings's article invites us to reflect on what has changed, and what has not changed, with the end of the Cold War. The foreign policy of the Cold War national security state rested on three pillars. The first was ideology. For the cold warriors, all foreign policy was reduced to a single overriding issue: the U.S.-Soviet rivalry and the communist threat. When viewed through the national security lens, the struggles of peasants for land, workers for labor rights, citizens for democratic freedoms, and nationalists for self-determination appeared as the unwitting manifestations of a Moscow-orchestrated conspiracy. The critics argued that as a result the United States repeatedly took the wrong side in popular struggles: our government supported landlords, exploiters, dictators, secret police, and puppet regimes. But in the eyes of the national security apparatchiks, the critics were simply on the wrong side in the Cold War. 1

The second pillar was interests. Popular struggles in the Third World often challenged private U.S. interests—fruit companies, mining firms, and weapons merchants among them. These interests sought, with the considerable success that money can buy, to identify their private aims with the public purpose: threats to their properties and privileges were deemed threats to national security.

The third pillar was composed of the institutions of the national security state itself. These agencies operated behind a veil of secrecy, well insulated from democratic controls and public accountability. This created an environment where the end could be taken to justify any means since the means were so conveniently shielded from public scrutiny.

The ideological pillar of Cold War foreign policy melted away with the demise of the Soviet Union, but the interests and institutions remain. The search is now on for a substitute ideology, again founded on a one-size-fits-all nemesis: religious fundamentalism (at least in its Islamic variants), population growth, and "rogue states" are among the leading contenders. But in the space created by the end of the Cold War, there is the possibility, if not the promise, of a more profound shift in the foundations of U.S. foreign policy.

***

It is in this context that I wish to comment on Bruce Cumings's article in this issue of the Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars. Cumings renders an important service in excavating the history of area studies in the United States in the early years of the Cold War—a history marked by covert funding and McCarthyite purges. He rightly points to the relevance of this period, and of the power-knowledge relationships that animated it, to the present unsettled era.

In fast forwarding from then to now Cumings skips lightly over the intervening decades—the sixties, seventies, and eighties—which saw the emergence of a generation of U.S. scholars many of whom challenged the fundamental assumptions of the national security state. These scholars are not entirely absent from Cumings's account—he mentions the rebirth of political economy, the counterhegemonic agendas of some area studies scholars, and the formative years of this journal—but their origins and consequences go largely unexamined. To bring them into the narrative of area and international studies would require us to rethink the relationship between power and knowledge, moving beyond the image of the national security agencies (or, for that matter, the global corporation) as the one and only heart pumping power to the intellectual capillaries.

Why did area studies, notwithstanding its Cold War origins, ultimately produce a substantial body of scholarship not only

---

*I am grateful to Mark Selden for comments on an earlier version of this piece.

1. Thus former under secretary of state Elliot Abrams, accused by journalist Allan Nairn of complicity in the mass murders committed by Guatemala's U.S.-backed military, retorted: "This guy thinks we were on the wrong side in the Cold War. Maybe he personally was on the other side." (The Charlie Rose Show, PBS, 31 Mar. 1995).
The alternative for area studies, as for the academy as a whole, is to strengthen its ties with broader constituencies, including the working and middle classes—the majority of the American public.

The wisdom of this decision was subsequently underscored when an amendment to the Department of Defense spending bill for FY 1996, signed into law in December 1995, tightened the NSEP's service requirement to specify that students who receive NSEP fellowships must subsequently work in either the Department of Defense or the “intelligence community,” failing which they would have to repay the full amount of their awards. This requirement was only partially loosened in a further amendment passed in September 1996, which gives priority to federal government employment in national-security-related fields (which can be broadly defined to include virtually anything in the international arena), but also allows students to fulfill the service requirement by working in higher education if no suitable government job is available at the time of graduation.

2. The Social Science Research Council (SSRC) / American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) Joint Committee on South Asia, among others, unequivocally opposed any association with the National Security Education Program (NSEP). In January 1993 the SSRC’s primary governance body, called the Committee on Problems and Policies, decided that the NSEP was an inappropriate mechanism for funding council programs as long as it retained any association with the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). The ACLS board passed a resolution voicing its opposition to the location of the NSEP within the Department of Defense and to the CIA’s role in its oversight structure.

3. See Amy Magaro Rubin, “Two Education Groups Threaten to Quit Foreign Study Program,” The Chronicle of Higher Education, 12 Jan. 1996, p. A40. Prior to this amendment, recipients were allowed to fulfill their service obligations by working for any branch of the federal government or in higher education.

The recent decision to dissolve the SSRC/ACLS Joint Committees appears to have been driven at least in part by the reluctance of foundations to continue to fund area studies. In particular, the Mellon Foundation, previously a major funder of the dissertation grants disbursed by the joint committees, decided to stop supporting “advanced training and research in area studies as traditionally defined,” and instead to replace this with support for seminars on comparative historical and cultural studies at “17 universities judged among the strongest in the humanities, social sciences, and studies of foreign cultures.” The Mellon Foundation’s annual reports make it clear that this new program targeted elite universities and was intended as an alternative, rather than an addition, to continued funding of more broadly based area studies programs.

The ultimate results of the ongoing restructuring of international programs at SSRC, ACLS, and elsewhere remain to be seen. If one result is greater emphasis on “globalization,” it would be facile to regard concern for “policy relevance” with subservience to national security bureaucrats. The corporations and national security agencies are certainly powerful, but they are not omnipotent: policy is not their exclusive preserve, nor should we cede it to them. Indeed, as Cumings suggests in his criticism of “hidebound, narrow scribblers” (who in my experience are at least as common among economists as among Sankritists), disengagement from policy can be as damaging as excessive preoccupation with it.

***

The current resource squeeze on area studies is symptomatic of the more general financial pressures confronting higher education in the United States. We may be witnessing the end of an era. The tremendous growth of higher education since World War II was accompanied by a remarkable degree of autonomy in academic institutions: the professoriate has been largely self-governing, allocating its own time, defining its research agendas, assessing merit on the basis of publication in peer-reviewed journals, and so on. One should not exaggerate this autonomy: the persecution of dissenters, notably in the 1950s, and the rewards provided to acolytes of the powerful have had profound effects. Nevertheless, few other salaried professionals in the

4. The September 1996 amendment to the Defense Authorization Act also extends the service requirement to undergraduate recipients of NSEP fellowships. The amendment was cosponsored by Senator Paul Simon (D., Illinois) and Congressman Bill Young (R., Florida). Young sponsored the December 1995 amendment.


6. On a more hopeful note, the Mellon Foundation recently resumed funding international dissertation fellowships through the restructured SSRC. For a description of the new program, see Kenneth Prewitt, “International Dissertation Field Research: A New Fellowship Program,” Items (New York, SSRC), vol. 50, no. 4, pp. 91–93.

United States have enjoyed comparable freedom.

Among other attractions, this arrangement provided the institutional space in which some scholars were able to pursue counterhegemonic agendas. At the same time, however, it permitted the growth of a self-referential, and self-reverential, academic culture with only weak ties to broader constituencies. Public intellectuals have been rare; policy intellectuals sponsored by think tanks or the government have generally addressed only a narrow audience of policy makers. Back on their campus reservations, all too many academics have lost the willingness and ability to communicate with external audiences. They could regard this isolation with equanimity as long as resources seemed assured. But in the new era of downsizing, restructuring, and rising public dismay at the cost of college education, the inability of academics to defend their claim on resources looms as a major liability indeed.

The higher education resource squeeze creates propitious circumstances for corporations and national security agencies to step into the breach. They have resources and can make them available—with strings attached. The NSEP service requirement is similar in this respect to university-based scientific research tied to commercial and defense-related ends. Such research is common in many countries: U.S. universities are not alone in their willingness to trade services for cash.

The alternative for area studies, as for the academy as a whole, is to strengthen its ties with broader constituencies, including the working and middle classes—the majority of the American public. Public support played a key role in building higher education in this country, and public support has helped to safeguard academic freedom. Faculty still rank higher in public esteem than politicians or corporate executives. It is time to redeem and renew this trust.

* * *

Comparable efforts are needed to lay the foundations for an alternative U.S. foreign policy, one based on support for the democratic distribution of power and respect for individual rights. Such a foreign policy would conform to the interests of working Americans, who stand to benefit, for example, from the international extension of labor rights. But the case for a prodemocratic foreign policy does not rest only on self-interest: it is founded above all on moral commitments. In the end, we oppose murder, torture, rape, and terror not as a matter of convenience, but as a matter of principle.

A prodemocratic foreign policy will require not only new foundations in ideology and interests, but also a dismantling of the institutional pillar of the Cold War national security state. Like Bruce Cumings and Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, I believe that the Central Intelligence Agency should be abolished. That’s the easy part. The hard part is defining what should be put in its place. Any foreign policy requires the institutional capacity to gather and analyze information. There is no ready-made blueprint for such institutions to serve a prodemocratic foreign policy, but I believe that two basic principles should guide their design. First, intelligence activities should be strictly limited to the gathering and analysis of information. In a prodemocratic foreign policy there would be no place for covert action, “dirty tricks,” or clandestine military and paramilitary assistance. Second, the information and analyses produced by intelligence agencies should be freely available to the public. One can imagine exceptions, for example when the information relates to criminal activities, but however delimited these should remain exceptions, and not the rule.

The abolition of the CIA, and the broader reorientation of U.S. foreign policy of which it would be emblematic, will come about only as part of a larger process involving the redefinition of the public interest and the renewal of democratic ideals. One important step in this process would be the creation of a Truth Commission charged with investigating and documenting abuses of power committed during the Cold War in the name of national security. As in other times and places, including post-apartheid South Africa and postwar El Salvador, such a commission could play a vital role in helping us to come to terms honestly with the past. Only then will the Cold War truly pass into history.
Moral Ambiguity, Disciplinary Power, and Academic Freedom

by John Lie*

In reading Bruce Cumings’s narrative about the two phases in the development of U.S. area studies—the early Cold War years and the post–Cold War period—I couldn’t help but recall the old adage: “first time as tragedy, second time as farce.” The pervasive elite networks that bound prestigious centers of learning, the inner recesses of the national security state, and the high-rolling foundations had, whatever their political and intellectual shortcomings, a grandeur of conception and execution. In contrast, the brouhaha over the National Security Education Act (NSEA)—including its evisceration by the Gingrich budget ax—smacks of a bungled play.

The academic freedom of many scholars in the contemporary United States is imperiled not so much by the Central Intelligence Agency as by the sheer economic constraints of the academic job market.

I highlight the contrast not out of nostalgia for the Cold War, but because the juxtaposition of the two phases occludes the morally ambiguous path from the past to the present. Cumings’s painstaking portrait of the collusion between the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the university during the early Cold War years should silence apologists and serve as a cautionary tale. His trenchant criticism of the early Cold War effort by the CIA and other security operatives to infiltrate and influence universities should be requisite reading for all area studies scholars and social scientists. We should combat the resurgence of insidious academic interference, such as that manifested in the NSEA, now and in the future. But the tragedy of intellectual compromise and political collaboration does not exhaust the story of area studies. Cumings elides the essential ambiguity and ambivalence of the area studies project, and the emphasis on black-and-white cases neglects other serious threats to academic freedom and integrity.

Here I take it as a given that area studies scholarship in the 1990s is fairly robust intellectually and relatively independent of covert CIA infiltration or overt national security influences. Cumings himself notes that leading scholars in some area studies, such as Latin American studies, are actively engaged in counterhegemonic projects. Indeed, the CIA or other security concerns seem marginal, not dominant, in most area studies centers in the 1990s. Most contemporary academics would refuse to subordinate their scholarly activity to the dictates of an external agent.

How did the CIA-infested area studies fields free themselves from such influence and become relatively autonomous? It is undeniable that the anti–Vietnam War movement contributed to the revival of radical scholarship and hence the emergence of critical voices in area studies and the social sciences. The Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars and this journal, for instance, reinvigorated Asian studies through political activity and serious scholarship. It is in no small part due to their longstanding effort that a howl of protest would greet agents or grants from the CIA in U.S. universities today.

Radical voices and movements are, however, far from adequate to explain the relative intellectual autonomy of area studies scholars and centers. Cumings passes over many of the architects of area studies who were critical in forging the institutional and intellectual foundation for area studies scholarship. It would be misleading to damn all the academics who were implicated in, but sought distance from, the Cold War. John King Fairbank is an exemplary figure in this regard. Needless to say, he was no saint. His checkered trajectory provides enough damaging grist for a prosecutorial mill. But he leveraged national security concerns to promote the production and dissemination of serious China scholarship in the United States, without embroiling himself in the most odious of intelligence-type research.

By juxtaposing the two phases and focusing on the most overt cases of academic compromise, Cumings obscures the complex and challenging tasks that face institution builders. As imperfect as he was, Fairbank sought to protect academic integrity, promote intellectual independence, and, simultaneously,
Some believe that the CIA-infested area studies fields freed themselves from such influence and became relatively autonomous partly because the anti-Vietnam War movement revived radical scholarship and led to critical voices in area studies and the social sciences. An early example of that sort of vigilance was the opposition at Southern Illinois University (SIU) at Carbondale in the early 1970s to the establishment of a Vietnam Center funded by the U.S. Government Agency for International Development. The center was intended to fulfill such government objectives as “special consultation and training services” for U.S. corporations and for agencies of the Washington and Saigon governments. The collapse of the center was one of the few clear-cut victories of the Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars (CCAS) over academic complicity in U.S. neocolonial designs for Indochina. One of those actively opposing the center was CCAS member Doug Allen, shown here speaking at a protest rally at SIU in the early 1970s. Allen later lost his job due to his more than five years of activism against the center, although the university was later forced to reinstate him. This photo is by John Lopinot and courtesy of Doug Allen.

It is the universal predicament of scholars to solicit patronage of the powerful and the wealthy while pursuing intellectual independence from them. Because the powerful and the wealthy have been predominantly butchers and crooks, scholars confront moral choices and compromises as they choose their “masters” for the sake of their “work.” The pragmatic use of external funds can be, as Cumings himself says of the Mellon Foundation grant to Northwestern University, fashioned to strike a blow against intellectual ethnocentrism and political stasis, as well as to promote critical scholarship. But these choices—whether it’s acceptable to receive money from Foundation X or Donor Y—are hardly ever black and white. Scholar-entrepreneurs usually find themselves in a muddy field that requires complex moral judgment. That they get muddy in building their scholarly edifices shouldn’t automatically condemn them.

***

Cumings is right to warn of the potential peril to academic freedom. As Alan Ryan notes:

3. See, for example, John Banville’s wonderful historical novels, Copernicus and Kepler.
To any non-American observer, the fragility of academic freedom in the United States has always been a surprising and alarming feature of a generally liberal country; commitment to the university as a place of contending unorthodoxies has always been weak, whether on the part of the trustees of private institutions or the legislatures that supervised public ones.

As Cumings points out, the indifferent and callous response of the Association for Asian Studies to the NSEA should be a topic of deep concern for Asianists. But his concern with this and other external threats bypasses other, and possibly worse, menaces to academic freedom. I agree that the CIA and its influence should be expunged in the university. However, vigilance on these external dangers may obscure an internal threat. In his 1951 book, White Collar, C. Wright Mills memorably wrote that “in a bureaucratic world of organized irresponsibility, the difficulty of speaking one’s mind in dissent has increased.” This is no less true for academics in contemporary universities than for their counterparts in large corporations. According to Mills, the principal curb on free expression is not so much external restraint as internalized norm:

[The] deepest problem of freedom for teachers is not the occasional outing of a professor, but a vague general fear—sometimes called “discretion” and “good judgment”—which leads to self-intimidation and finally becomes so habitual that the scholar is unaware of it. The real restraints are not so much external prohibitions as manipulative control of the insurgent by the agreements of academic gentlemen.

The constraint, however shaped by economic and political power, is just as profoundly social in character. Cumings’s focus on sovereign or despotic power therefore seems misplaced. Following Foucault, I would argue that the capillary operation of power is disciplinary in nature. What sustains the status quo in the university is not so much the iron grip of the CIA but the velvet touch of the ineffable— the desire for “respectability” and the tyranny of “opinion.”

In addition, the academic freedom of many scholars in the contemporary United States is imperiled not so much by the CIA or disciplinary power as by the sheer economic constraints of the academic job market. Given the financial straits that face most universities, the most potent threat to academic freedom and intellectual efflorescence is not so much the overt effort to control the university, but the proletarianization of professors and the pauperization of universities. The growth of part-time instructors and unemployed Ph.D.s imply that these would-be academics operate in a world without the privilege and protection of academic freedom. Like all forms of freedom, academic freedom is a privilege and one that may be restricted to the ever narrowing band of the few fortunate tenured professors, while the vast majority will be merely free to teach six courses a term.

I find Cumings’s proposals appealing—such as eliminating the CIA and traditional social science disciplinary distinctions. However, I wonder whether they will achieve the end he desires—a condition in which academic freedom is guaranteed, and vigorous and critical scholarship flourishes.

Consider his proposal to abolish the traditional social science departments. Although I agree with the impulse and deplore the disciplinary status quo, I also think we need to think through what will replace what we have. As problematic as the traditional disciplines are, it remains the case that they have positive functions. Discipline-based departments and professional associations remain, for good and ill, the institutional bases of academic freedom as we know it. In this regard, Louis Menand writes:

The structure of disciplinarity that has arisen with the modern research university is expensive; it is philosophically weak; and it encourages intellectual predictability, professional insularity, and social irrelevance. It deserves to be replaced. But if it is replaced, it is in the interests of everyone who values the continued integrity of teaching and inquiry to devise a new institutional structure that will perform the same function. Otherwise academic freedom will be killed by the thing that, in America, kills most swiftly and surely: not bad ideas, but lack of money.

Even if one superdiscipline of political economy will sustain academic freedom, it may result in an unfortunate and unintended consequence. Consider in this regard that Cumings’s main academic bête noire of the 1990s beside the NSEA is rational choice theory in the social sciences. Rational choice theory is but warmed-over neoclassical economics and should be mercilessly criticized. As Cumings acknowledges, however, area studies scholars, who are steeped in language, history, and culture, constitute a powerful intellectual bulwark against the universalistic pretensions of rational choice theory. The crucial countervailing academic force against rational choice theory is, in other words, the very product of the Cold War–inspired area studies, albeit one purged of the most pernicious ties to the national security state. Here again, Cumings’s critique of area studies obscures its positive contribution. Fairbank, for example, was instrumental in severing Chinese history from antiquated Orientalism and invigorating it by incorporating, and simultaneously challenging, social science theories. Fairbank wrote in 1957 against the “remarkable parochialism on the part of Western political science,” which “has resulted from a mistaken doctrine of scientific universality which forbids ‘regional’ specialization.” As much as he himself embraced modernization theory, the intellectual influence of area studies scholarship, including Fairbank’s work, challenged modernization theory and other facile universalistic social-sciences theories. Pathbreaking works of Barrington Moore Jr. or Immanuel Wallerstein depended in no small measure on area studies scholarship.

---

6. Ibid., p. 151.
What will take the place of area studies or pose countervailing intellectual influence against the potential hegemony of rational choice theory in the new superdiscipline of political economy? After all, academic disciplines do have a strong inner impulse toward intellectual and social irrelevance. As Thorstein Veblen or C. Wright Mills might have pointed out, the pursuit of scholarly status distinction fuels the drive toward irrelevance—the academic equivalent of conspicuous consumption—and barren scholasticism. In the 1990s rational choice theory and postmodernism are two sides, albeit one “scientific” and the other “humanistic,” of the same academic coin. The heir apparent of classical political economy—the intellectual lineage charted by Adam Smith and Karl Marx—was, after all, economics. Contemporary economics is, however, by and large a barren intellectual field and one most inimical to the scholarly claims of area studies—and politically conservative to boot. What will assure that the same sad fate will not befall the new political economy department from being taken over by rational choice theory? Disciplinary turf battles, as intellectually counterproductive as they may often be, can also forge a protective crucible for alternative perspectives and critical approaches.

Furthermore, the call for social relevance comes largely from outside the Ivory Tower, whether from the CIA, corporate headquarters, or the streets. Just as much as the anti-Vietnam War movement kept the CIA in check, it nurtured critical scholarship. The intellectual conversion of so many former critical scholars to contemporary forms of barren scholasticism, whether the hard variant of rational choice theory or the soft variant of postmodern social theory, is in part due to the decline of the American and international left. But it is unclear why one form of external influence should be banned but not another. If Cumings wants the CIA out of the university, then what will stop other academics from keeping out anti-war protesters in the name of academic freedom? Academic freedom may very well squelch the desire for social relevance.

Academic freedom is not an unblemished good in and of itself. It remains, at bottom, a privilege for a small circle of academics who may abuse it merely to promote their professional status and to produce barren scholasticism. As academics repel the influence of the CIA and national security concerns, they may equally refuse the democratic call for social relevance. We find ourselves, then, in a fairly foggy field with intersecting claims and concerns. Just as academics must choose their “masters” in the American university, they find themselves embroiled in cross-cutting vectors of political claims and counterclaims.

Nonetheless, the protection of academic freedom is a worthy endeavor and one that stands to ultimately promote serious and critical scholarship. It seems obvious enough to suggest that academics should themselves organize to protect their freedom. Most of them alas remain lamentably content to accept the status quo. The American Association of University Professors (AAUP), for all its problems, remains one of the few loci for protecting academic freedom. To insist on pure principles in academic affairs seems no more responsible or effective than to brandish the empty universal of academic neutrality and freedom. As Thorstein Veblen or C. Wright Mills might have pointed out, the past that Cumings has so brilliantly illuminated will help us not to repeat its mistakes.

Focusing on the worst cases of academic compromise can obscure the complex and challenging tasks facing institution builders. One such institution builder was John King Fairbank, shown above at Beijing University in 1979. A China specialist who taught at Harvard from 1936 till 1977, Fairbank directed Harvard’s East Asian Research Center for eighteen years. Many believe he did well in protecting academic integrity and promoting intellectual independence while finding funds to make scholarship possible. Some members of the Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars, however, feel that when in 1971 they called attention to specific government/intelligence threats to the China field, Fairbank responded defensively rather than honestly trying to answer the questions they raised. This photo is a cropped version of a photo that appears in Fairbank’s Chinabound: A Fifty-Year Memoir (New York: Harper and Row, 1982); the photo is reprinted here with permission.

pages of staid academic journals, seems to have replaced demonstrating in the streets or engaging with the mass media. But who but an alliance of academics should be at the forefront of protecting academic freedom?

Academic institution-building—whether the forging of area studies and critical scholarship, or the protection of academic freedom and alternative perspectives—is a slow process. To insist on pure principles in academic affairs seems no more responsible or effective than to brandish the empty universal of academic neutrality and freedom.

Given that I mainly agree with Cumings’s analysis and politics, it is odd that I have dwelt at length on our disagreements. This may well be a flaw of self-styled critical intellectuals. In closing, I can only hope that, to paraphrase Santayana’s cliché, the past that Cumings has so brilliantly illuminated will help us not to repeat its mistakes.
The CIA and Me
by Chalmers Johnson

Reading Bruce Cumings's piece brought home to me that I am several months beyond age sixty-five and by no stretch of the imagination any longer young. After finishing what he had written and reflecting on my own close encounters with some of the people he mentions, I pulled out of a storage cabinet a rather battered old file called “U.S. Government” dealing with my activities as a consultant for the Office of National Estimates of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and for the Sandia National Laboratories at Kirtland Air Force Base in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

What strikes me as more damaging about Cumings's portrayal of the involvement of the academic community in producing such ideology is not the government's paying for it but the gullibility of the scholars who wrote it and of educated Americans in general who read it.

Poking through old letters and clippings from twenty-five years ago, I was reminded that not all of the people I worked with fit Bruce Cumings’s description of Philip Mosely. I asked myself why, even though he is right on all the fundamentals, and particularly on the crisis of preconception versus observation that is undermining academic social science today, his treatment doesn’t quite ring true, at least in my experience. For every Philip Mosely I can think of several Hal Fords who served the truth and their country with as great distinction as any academic I know. (Harold P. Ford, Ph.D., Chicago, 1950, mentioned favorably in the Pentagon Papers, resigned from the CIA in 1974 and testified against Gates’s appointment as Director of Central Intelligence in 1991.) I consider Stansfield Turner’s book on terrorism, even though it was scarcely noticed and soon out of print, more valuable than decades of articles on the same subject in World Politics or International Organization. If Cumings thinks that a good deal of academic writing on East Asia by authors who had some connection with the U.S. government is tainted, what does he think of the unreadable trash piled up year in and year out in the name of the academic tenure racket?

The remarks that follow are not an “outing.” I have never hidden the fact that I had a consultant’s relationship with the most important office within the CIA (I included it my résumé in 1988, when I moved as a professor from the Berkeley to the San Diego campus of the University of California), and I am not here offering a defense of that relationship. But I think the issues are more complicated than Cumings portrays them. I have sometimes thought that, given the potency of truly objective information, perhaps the CIA could truly function as its founders intended only when the Director of Central Intelligence and the Secretary of State were brothers (that is, Allen and John Foster Dulles).

I am not going to name my colleagues at the CIA, even though most of them resigned after Kissinger virtually destroyed the estimating process at the end of the first Nixon administration (more on that below), because I no longer have their addresses to clear my remarks with them. Ray Cline, George Carver, and probably others are in any case dead. In looking through old letters I see that I agreed “to keep forever secret” all classified information I obtained reading draft national intelligence estimates. Most of what I know has long ago been published in the newspapers, and that is what I will quote. But I do fit Bruce Cumings’s profile in that I had a top secret clearance at the CIA and a Q clearance (atomic energy) at Sandia. Nonetheless, I was never paid anything more than travel expenses, I never presented a “U.S. government” position in my teaching or public speaking (the Board of National Estimates would have been a bad place in which to try to find out what the U.S. government position on any international subject might be), and none of my research was ever based on classified sources.

Cumings writes, “Nothing could be more sacred to faculty offered tenure-to-the-grave security and full legal protection for their viewpoints, however heretical, than honesty and full disclosure before their colleagues and students—something

1. See Stansfield Turner, Terrorism and Democracy (Boston, MA: Houghton-Mifflin, 1991); Turner was Director of Central Intelligence from 1977 to 1981.
unavailable to those who sign agreements never to speak or write about what they do for intelligence agencies.” I agree that honesty and full disclosure are at the heart of the scholarly enterprise, but I disagree that tenure necessarily protects the honest, or that full legal protection is ever forthcoming from one’s university colleagues for any and all viewpoints, or that involvement with the government on its terms, particularly for those who teach about government, inevitably damages one’s credibility or verisimilitude.

On 12 November 1968 Richard Helms, then Director of Central Intelligence, invited me to serve as an “intermittent consultant” to the Board of National Estimates. The appointment offered me some relief from the stultifying Maoist uniformity prevailing in my university during the late 1960s, as well as contact with people who knew a great deal about my specialty in those days—namely, Chinese communism. I am not being coy when I say that I never expected to be writing for the Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars, given that I was then being systematically attacked in its pages for arguing that the Chinese communists’ mass following depended in large part on nationalism stimulated by the brutality of the Japanese invasion, or for noting that the antifascist protesters against U.S. policy in Vietnam were poorly informed about Vietnamese communism, or for holding that the Cultural Revolution was a disaster and that those who praised the Great Helmsman’s insights into bureaucracy were naive and ill-informed.

In 1972 I left the China field—aware that my views on China were being drowned out by the then prevailing campus Maoism—and shifted full time to the study of Japan. Today I am aware that from the last years of the Occupation of Japan until at least when Tanaka Kakuei became prime minister, the Central Intelligence Agency used money, disinformation, and clandestine support for the neofascist right and the criminal underworld to rig the Japanese political system, suppress the antigovernment movement in Okinawa, and keep the Liberal Democratic Party in power. The agency probably no longer does these things in Japan, not because it does not want to but because U.S. money has become more or less worthless in rich Asia. As the Taiwan Lobby demonstrated in the granting of a visa to President Lee Teng-hui to visit the United States and in many other examples during the 1996 presidential election, wealthy Asians are now starting to rig the U.S. political system, which is only to be expected.

But I never once heard these things discussed at the CIA. I worked in the estimating and analytical side of the agency, not that of covert operations and clandestine services. I agree with Hal Ford that “intelligence analysis, . . . submitting these findings to fierce scrutiny and debate, and then instructing senior policy-makers about the true state of the world, . . . not covert-action shenanigans . . . are the principle purposes of U.S. intelligence.”

The explicit reason for the creation of the CIA, reflected in the name given to it, “was to end the turf-protecting and squirreling away of intelligence that had contributed to the Pearl Harbor disaster. . . . ” The locus classicus on the intelligence disaster leading up to Pearl Harbor, particularly on the catastrophic inability to distinguish noise from signals, was itself originally a highly classified study—namely, Roberta Wohlstetter’s Pearl Harbor: Warning and Decision. I think that rather than abolishing the CIA, as Cumings recommends, one would be better advised to dismantle or totally separate out clandestine activities and to reinforce Director of Central Intelligence control of the entire intelligence community, including above all the Pentagon’s exorbitantly expensive operations. In any case, my work at the Office of National Estimates never involved Japan, except to read an occasional paper on the Japanese Communist Party, papers reflecting the U.S. ideological obsession with the Left in Japan and the U.S. failure to notice that the right was building Japan into the United States’ most formidable competitor.

In 1968 I accepted Richard Helms’s invitation with alacrity because as a political scientist I also wanted to know more about the CIA, and I looked forward to talking with its analysts such as Philip L. Bridgham, who were among the most astute writers on Mao’s China. As a student of government I was interested in the CIA, in espionage, in why the United States was making such serious blunders in understanding both the Chinese and Vietnamese revolutions, and in where my own country was headed. I greatly enjoyed the twice-yearly meetings at Allen Dulles’s hunting lodge at a CIA training base near Norfolk, Virginia, and I was fascinated by and learned a great deal from the comments of such figures as Hamilton Fish Armstrong, Llewellyn Thompson, Gordon Craig, Robert Bowie, Sam Huntington, and Raymond Sontag.

Sontag, who died in 1972, worked for the Office of Strategic Services during World War II and subsequently became chief editor supervising the U.S. publication of captured German Foreign Office documents. After leaving the Board of National Estimates in 1953, he came to Berkeley as a professor of German history and remained one of the board’s consultants until his death. I sought and followed his advice in accepting Helms’s invitation to join the group of consultants in 1968.

What precisely did we do for the CIA? In 1951 Allen Dulles “accepted a recommendation that a group of eminent outside experts be employed to check over the estimates prepared within the agency” to prevent bureaucratic logrolling of all sorts. This resulted in “a panel of some 15 outsiders, mostly from university centers. Three or four times a year these people would come to Washington to review the work of the people inside government responsible for making up the national


5. On Bridgham’s work, see, for example, “The International Impact of Maoist Ideology,” in Chalmers Johnson, ed., Ideology and Politics in Contemporary China (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1973), where Bridgham’s employer is clearly identified.
estimates that strategy and policy are based on. The panel was made up of people chosen for their objectivity; there were no zealots among them." Bruce Cumings may not agree with this description, but it rings true in my own experience. The existence of this system was never disclosed nor was it publicly acknowledged by its officials, but it did not know that.

We read draft intelligence estimates. We did not see raw intelligence, although we could ask for a code number that indicated the probable reliability of some piece of information. The debates were at a very high level. I shall never forget being reprimanded by Sontag when I blurted out what I thought U.S. policy on a particular matter ought to be. “That remark is off the reservation,” he said. “We do not do intelligence about the true state of the world. Originally CIA leaders chose people for the CIA’s Office of National Estimates for their objectivity, but Kissinger ended up closing that office down in 1972 because he couldn’t control it and thus the estimates sometimes failed to support or justify his policies. The office was resurrected when George Bush took over the directorship of the CIA in 1977, but under Bush the people working there were chosen for their conformity to one hard-line point of view. This had disastrous results. And then during the Reagan-Bush era Bush went on to use counterterrorism to solidify his power base, in the process setting in motion a string of foreign relations debacles, the most famous of which is the subject of this cartoon. The cartoon is by and courtesy of Matt Wuerker and is from the CovertAction Quarterly (Washington, D.C.), no. 58 (fall 1996), p. 33.

Chalmers Johnson maintains that the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) is not in itself evil if judged by Hal Ford’s description of its original purpose: estimating and analyzing, submitting findings to fierce scrutiny and debate, and then using them to instruct senior policy makers about the true state of the world. Originally CIA leaders chose people for the CIA’s Office of National Estimates for their objectivity, but Kissinger ended up closing that office down in 1972 because he couldn’t control it and thus the estimates sometimes failed to support or justify his policies. The office was resurrected when George Bush took over the directorship of the CIA in 1977, but under Bush the people working there were chosen for their conformity to one hard-line point of view. This had disastrous results. And then during the Reagan-Bush era Bush went on to use counterterrorism to solidify his power base, in the process setting in motion a string of foreign relations debacles, the most famous of which is the subject of this cartoon. The cartoon is by and courtesy of Matt Wuerker and is from the CovertAction Quarterly (Washington, D.C.), no. 58 (fall 1996), p. 33.

Particularly with regard to Vietnam, many senior analysts were passionately opposed to President Johnson’s and President Nixon’s policies; and after the Pentagon Papers had been made public many of these analysts were quietly exultant that their pessimistic estimates of whether the United States could win the war were now an official part of the public record.

In 1977 under George Bush’s directorship something like the old Office of National Estimates was resurrected but staffed with analysts known for their hard line on the USSR and their devotion to worst case analyses. All intelligence estimating involves combining past behaviors, current capabilities, and future intentions. All forms of “theory” are to be avoided to the greatest extent possible since theoretical blunders are the surest way not to see something that is in the picture but not obvious. A worst case estimate is one that refuses even to consider intentions, even though they are admittedly the hardest things to estimate, and relies only on behaviors and capabilities. The devotion to worst case estimates that started in the late 1970s undoubtedly drove the Soviet-American arms race and contributed in the 1980s both to the bankruptcy of the USSR and to the United States becoming the world’s largest debtor nation.

We now know that Team B, as Bush’s estimators were known, was a disaster. Former Soviet economists have told us that the CIA basically got the Soviet military estimate right but that its analysts, including its consultants, were simply incapable of believing that the USSR was spending around 26 percent of its national product on the military. Unable to imagine a truly totalitarian system despite their hard-line anticommunism, the Team B analysts therefore inflated the size of the Soviet economy so that the proportion spent on armaments was about twice ours, circa 15 percent. Ray Cline called the panel “a kangaroo court of outside critics all picked for one point of view.” This occurred after my time, but it reminds me of what was lost in the retirements of 1973 and 1974 and how deadly serious the discussion of the Soviet military estimate was when I was privileged to sit in on it. The United States had been well served by its officials, but it did not know that.

A recent Japanese study of the CIA identifies me as a former consultant to the agency, and says that I believe the United States needs at least as good intelligence support for its economy as that provided by the Japanese government to its enterprises. I plead guilty. For similar reasons I attended the

7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
CIA-sponsored seminar held in October 1990 at Eastman Kodak headquarters, with support from the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT), to discuss the technological challenge to the United States posed by Japan. When the very existence of such a seminar blew up into a press firestorm, two of the attendees, Jeffrey Garten and Kent Calder, feigned ignorance and shock over who had sponsored the conference. I said that I knew it was a CIA-sponsored meeting, that I approved of Americans discussing such matters, and that the book written by an RIT staff person summarizing the conference was “naive but not inaccurate” about many of the concerns raised there.¹⁰

What does all this have to do with the serious problems of academic integrity raised by Bruce Cumings in his paper? Several things, it seems to me. I agree with him that much of the so-called political development literature written during the 1960s was ideological. Its intent was to counter the appeals of Marxism. The United States woke up late to the fact that there was an ideological dimension to the Cold War and that their side needed something as appealing as the tenets of “scientific socialism,” which had, after all, attracted the allegiance of the Chinese, perhaps the least likely people on earth to pay attention to foreign ideologies.

The political development literature was not nearly the most effective or the most insidious of the U.S. propaganda doctrines produced at this time. First place assuredly goes to neoclassical economics in its fully mathematized version. What strikes me as more damaging about Cumings’s portrayal of the involvement of the academic community in producing such ideology is not the government’s paying for it but the gullibility of the scholars who wrote it and of educated Americans in general who read it. Much like Team B in dealing with the Soviet estimate, they allowed the deck to be stacked by excluding critics and did not exercise the routine quality control that must be part of any academic enterprise. I believe this illustrates that the university is as susceptible to error as the government, and that the biases and omissions of the political development and rational choice literature cannot all be laid on the doorstep of those who paid for it.

Surely the greatest U.S. error was not in meeting their communist adversaries on the plane of ideology but of making the fatal mistake of believing their own propaganda. The lesson of Vietnam, it seems to me, is not that the intelligence was wrong, or the presidents stupid, or the experts silenced, but that virtually the whole government succumbed to an ideological hubris insulated from any Cartesian correctives or that rarest of commodities, honest criticism. This is the message of a little known classic on the Vietnam War, Patrick Lloyd Hatcher’s *The Suicide of an Elite: American Internationalists and Vietnam.*¹¹ Contrary to Cumings’s suggestions that we need to further isolate academic research from real world concerns, I believe we need to ensure that the marketplace of ideas actually flourishes within academic communities.


The Making of Southeast Asian Studies: Cornell's Experience

by George McT. Kahin

On the basis of my own experience it would be most appropriate to comment primarily on that part of Bruce Cumings's essay that deals with the Cold War period. But I'd first like to express my appreciation for the value of his contribution as a whole. And this certainly includes his criticisms of the proposed Social Science Research Council restructuring and especially of the National Security Education Act. His assessment of the postwar relationship of the major foundations and the U.S. intelligence arms is persuasive and, I think, healthfully illuminating. I would, however, like to suggest a qualification to this assessment, as well as mention a few complementary additions. Though I like some of the prescriptions in his conclusions, I cannot agree with them all.

My own experience with foundation support for research and teaching on Southeast Asia brought me to conclude that senior, and even intermediate, officials within the foundations sometimes had considerable latitude of discretion. And so . . . I suggest that caution be exercised in arriving at generalizations embracing all programs of area study.

If Bruce Cumings or others are disposed to pursue the path he has opened, I would hope that the Pentagon's relations—whether direct or through foundations—with the universities during the Cold War could be examined. For I think it very likely that this relationship had significant parallels with what he has disclosed concerning the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)’s ties with the universities during that period. Admittedly this effort would be difficult, often frustrating, and certainly time consuming. The easiest point of entry would probably be the studies sponsored by the U.S. Advanced Research Projects Agency. These enrolled numerous university-based personnel—sometimes indirectly via such entities as the Bendix Corporation and the Research Analysis Corporation.

A more immediate supplement to Bruce’s study that I would like to suggest is an extension of his inquiry to examine the chains of command within the foundations. For it should not be assumed that those manning these posts necessarily saw things the same way as their superiors, nor that they always carried out their orders without significant modification. I urge this examination because my own experience with foundation support for research and teaching on Southeast Asia brought me to conclude that, senior, and even intermediate, officials within the foundations sometimes had considerable latitude of discretion and, on occasion, substantially modified the programs their boards of directors and top executive officers had charted. And so, though I think Bruce Cumings has marshaled compelling evidence to support his thesis so far as postwar Soviet and China area work is concerned, I suggest that caution be exercised in arriving at generalizations embracing all programs of area study. In any case, I must acknowledge that never in my own dealings with the officers of the three major foundations, or later with the Luce Foundation, did I feel under any pressure to conform to Cold War considerations.

Of course in the context of the Cold War the Soviet Union and China were both of much greater importance to both the U.S. intelligence community and the foundations than was Southeast Asia. Indeed, with respect to the priorities of the U.S. intelligence arms, it was not until the 1960s that Southeast Asia began to attain much prominence, and by that time the foundations had already made their major financial commitments in the shaping of area studies. This may help explain why, at least during the formative first decade and a half following World War II, the reins of control held by the top leaderships of the major foundations over their senior officers

1. Some Advanced Research Projects Agency studies were subsequently made public through publication, often by the U.S. government's Rand Corporation.
2. It was not until 1960 that Eisenhower arrived at the bizarre conclusion (and later convinced a gullible Kennedy) that Laos was a key area in the outcome of the Cold War.
Owen Lattimore, shown above with Yamamoto Tatsuro in Rome in 1955, was a Johns Hopkins University specialist in China and Central Asia who was charged by Senator Joseph McCarthy in 1950 as being a top secret Soviet spy, the boss of the whole ring of which Hiss was a part, although this was later reduced to his being blamed as the mastermind of the U.S. Asian policy that allowed the "loss of China." Both charges were, of course, absurd, as Herbert Block's cartoon on the right suggests, but many other academics became suspect for supporting Lattimore against the charges. Nevertheless George McT. Kahin found that he was not prevented from being given grants from foundations even though he had supported Lattimore, antagonized McCarthy, had his own adversarial relationship with the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the State Department, and was previously denied a passport to Indonesia because of his opposition to the policies there. In fact, in negotiating for Cornell for support of research or teaching about Southeast Asia, in no case did Kahin find that the grants were conditioned on conformity with policies of the U.S. government. The above photo is a cropped version of a photo in John King Fairbank's Chinabound: A Fifty-Year Memoir (New York: Harper and Row, 1982). The cartoon is ©1950 the Washington Post Co. and is from The Herblock Book (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1952). Both graphics are reprinted here with permission.

3. So far as I am aware, the only Southeast Asia area programs supported during this period by the three major foundations were at Yale and Cornell. Unfortunately the Yale program soon atrophied because of the tragic deaths of two of its four faculty. (John Embree was killed by a drunken motorist in New Haven, and Raymond Kennedy was shot to death in West Java, probably either by Turk Westerling's men or the Darul Islam.) And often considerable sympathy for my own criticisms of U.S. policy toward that area. And certainly Cornell did not look to Harvard's Russian Research Center as a model for the establishment of either its Southeast Asia Program or Modern Indonesia Project; nor did those who established these organizations have either CIA ties or background.

Here I should mention that as a consequence of my own adversarial relationships with the CIA, State Department, and Senator Joseph McCarthy, I was particularly alert to any suggestion that grants for research and teaching on Southeast Asia required conformity to U.S. policy toward the area. These relationships were well known to Lauriston Sharp, the first director of Cornell's Southeast Asia Program, and members of the Departments of Government and Asian Studies when in 1951 I was hired as an assistant professor and concurrently executive director of the university's just launched Southeast Asia Program. To make this clear, and especially for an appreciation of the reaction of foundation officers, I must refer to a bit of relevant personal history.
While carrying out dissertation research in Indonesia in 1948 I had bitterly antagonized the CIA's first representative there during his brief visit to the revolutionary capital of Yog­
yakarta when he insisted that as the only U.S. citizen living there I had a duty to help him, and I categorically refused, causing him to denounce me both in Washington and Indonesia as "pro-Com­
munist." From mid-1950 through mid-1954 I was similarly attack­ed by the first U.S. ambassador to Indonesia, Merle Co­
chran, who was furious because I had prepared memoranda for Arthur Vandenberg and several other senators criticizing him for having pressured the Indonesians into making excessive conces­sions to the Dutch. To ensure I would not be able to return to Indonesia during his ambassadorship, Cochran elaborated on the CIA agent's charge, alleging to the State Department's Security Division and Passport Office that I had been "constantly in­volved in Indonesian politics, closely associated with the Indo­nesian Communist group, involved in the Communist rebellion" (of 1948 against the Indonesian Republic), and had in Indonesia "represented myself as being an American Government agent" (thus violating the Logan Act)—a most remarkable combination of charges such as I suppose few other ambassadors would have had the imagination to concoct!

I had managed to antagonize McCarthy by having organ­ized graduate students at Johns Hopkins in support of Owen Lattimore, and having induced the senator's office staff to let me see the grossly doctored cut-and-paste versions he had obliged them to make up of some of Lattimore's writings. (McCarthy was sufficiently incensed that during my first two years at Cornell he had his agents, paid for by his angel Alfred Kohlberg, make a record of my lectures in my class on U.S.-Asian rela­tions.) Bundling my support of Lattimore together with his own charges and that of the CIA agent, Ambassador Cochran had little trouble in convincing the passport office and the State Depart­ment's Security Division, headed by Scott McLeod, that my passport should be revoked to ensure I would not revisit Indonesia. I go into this detail because both my colleagues at Cornell and the senior officers of the Rockefeller Foundation, which provided the first grants (1951 and 1954) in support of Cornell's Southeast Asia Program, had been made fully aware of these allegations and of my friendship with and support of Owen Lattimore.

Even more supportive was the attitude of the Ford Founda­tion officials with whom I dealt, especially Cleon O. Swayzee and later Clarence Thurber. In mid-1953 Ford's board of trustees had decided to mount studies of communist movements in four Asian countries headed by noncommunist governments (India, Indonesia, Japan, and I think Iran). That fall the foundation sent Paul Langer to invite me to head such a project on Indonesia. I told him that I was unwilling to direct a study that did not extend to other aspects of Indonesian society, and that with respect to the political dimension it would have to embrace not only communism but the whole spectrum of the country's politics, with the Islamic and social democratic streams each receiving as much attention as communism. Langer did not appear sanguine about such a possibility, but he undertook to report my conditions to his superior, Cleon Swayzee, the Ford Foundation's director of research, with whom I then discussed the matter. I found Swayzee almost as critical of the foundation's inordinate empha­sis on communism as I was. He readily agreed that even those obsessed with Indonesian communism alone could understand it better within the context of the whole range of that country's political life. And thus in the Ford-supported Modern Indonesia Project that was established at Cornell in the spring of 1954, of those of its resources devoted to the study of political parties the proportion assigned to the study of the Communist Party was close to the 18 percent it won in Indonesia's 1955 elections.

I must emphasize that Swayzee arranged this grant to Cornell in full knowledge of the above-mentioned allegations against me, and realizing that because of the continued withhold­ing of my passport there was no assurance when I might be able to get back to Indonesia to carry out research and supervise the other members of the project, all of whom I was free to select. And he authorized this grant, which was twice later augmented, while fully aware that the State Department strongly disap­proved of it. Only in the fall of 1954, six months after Ford had financed the project, was I able—after a persistent effort of more than four years—to reclaim my passport and return to Indonesia. Even so, Cochran's successor as ambassador to Jakarta and his allies in the State Department tried hard—ultimately unsuccessful­ly—to stop me from getting back to Indonesia. And so on the basis of my own experience I believe Bruce Cumings's main thesis should be qualified in so far as Southeast Asia is con­cerned.

There were probably many efforts by the CIA and Pentagon during the Cold War to shape opinion that only a small minority of those involved in area and international studies were aware of. Let me mention two examples that are known to me.

First, of at least significant indirect influence on the U.S. academic community was the CIA's massive book program.

---

4. Scott McLeod, McCarthy's staunch ally, had been appointed by J. F. Dulles to head the State Department's Security Division in the mistaken expectation that this would make the senator more cooperative.

5. The scope and nature of the project's research are discussed in the article, "Cornell's Modern Indonesia Project," _Indonesia_ (Ithaca, NY), no. 48 (Oct. 1989), pp. 1-25.

6. This was possible only after the State Department established a review board (made up of foreign service officers) in 1954 for cases of passport denial, and I was fortunate enough to obtain the help of a very able pro bono lawyer. Once he threatened to subpoena Cochran to testify before the board, the ex-ambassador (by then comfortably positioned in the World Bank) dropped all his allegations.

7. Shortly before my departure for Indonesia a memorandum of 21 Sep­tember 1954 from the head of the Passport Division via Scott McLeod to the head of the State Department's Pacific and Southeast Asia Affairs Office charged with respect to the project I was to direct: "He now proposes to set up in Indonesia a staff numerically superior [sic] to the regular staff of the diplomatic mission in Indonesia. . . . Judging by his previous performance, there will be unrest, discord, and an association with revolutionary elements highly dangerous in a country as disturbed as Indonesia. Why do you risk this? There could develop competing missions in Indonesia, the official mission representing the government of the United States and an unofficial mission financed by the funds provided by the Ford Foundation and purporting to represent Cornell University but having tie-ins with intellectuals in many other organiza­tions." The full text of this memorandum is reproduced in "Cornell's Modern Indonesia Project," pp. 4-5.
By the end of 1967 it had “produced, subsidized or sponsored” both abroad and in the United States “well over 1,000 books,” with a major U.S. publishing house under contract with the CIA” involved with some of them. In some cases their authors worked in direct collaboration with the agency, the chief of its propaganda unit writing in 1961 that it “must make sure the actual manuscript will correspond with our operational and propagandistic intention.”

When the Church Committee in 1976 “reviewed a few examples of what the chief of the CIA’s Covert Action Staff termed books ‘published for operational reasons regardless of commercial viability,’” its first example was “a book about the conflict in Indochina [which] was produced in 1954 [sic., 1964] at the initiation of the CIA’s Far East Division” “by a major U.S. publishing house under contract to the CIA.” Copies were distributed “to selected newspapers and magazine editors both in the United States and abroad,” as well as to foreign embassies in this country. This was almost certainly Hoang Van Chi’s savage indictment of the Hanoi regime, From Colonialism to Communism, one of the most influential books shaping American attitudes during the early years of U.S. intervention in Vietnam. It was then used in numerous college-level courses.

Not until the end of 1967 did the CIA suspend “direct publication subsidization within the United States not only of books, but also of journals and newsletters.” But the Church Committee in 1976 was stonewalled by the CIA in its efforts to obtain “a number of the titles and names of authors of the propaganda books published” over the previous nine years, that is, since 1967. The CIA was willing to indicate only that the books covered several widely ranging general topics. When in 1989 Victor Navasky, editor of The Nation, brought a suit before three successive levels of U.S. federal courts to obtain a list of just the books the CIA had “produced, subsidized or sponsored before the end of 1967” he was unsuccessful.

The U.S. military, too, mounted covert efforts to mold opinion within the U.S. academic community. One of its means for achieving this, I learned by accident, was its Historical Evaluation and Research Organization (HERO), whose activities surely merit further scrutiny. In early May 1965 it undertook a crash program to build public support for Johnson’s newly escalated involvement in the Vietnam War by launching a journal meant to promote backing by U.S. “intellectuals” and especially members of the academic community. Officially, establishment of the new journal, Vietnam Perspectives, was attributed to its first editor, Wesley Fishel of Michigan State University, and the American Friends of Vietnam, which he chaired. But the initiative for this operation was taken by and its initial financing arranged by Chester Cooper, McGeorge Bundy’s senior Asian adviser, and Colonel T. N. Dupuy, HERO’s executive director, whose office furnished essential management, personnel, and logistics.

Dupuy and his office worked together with Fishel to provide reporting and analysis on Vietnam that would in Dupuy’s words give “the kind of balance which has been so sadly lacking in the past” and “show how uninformed, patriotic American intellectuals have been unwitting, gullible dupes of the Communists because they have accepted distorted and false facts.” The major target out of the 41,000 readers to whom the journal was to be sent would be “some 26,000 college-level social science teachers,” followed by “10,600 clergy or leading church laymen, 1,776 daily newspapers, 650 TV stations, 641 Junior Chambers of Commerce, 580 Senators and Congressmen, the presidents of the 500 largest corporations in the U.S., and a few others.”

The catalyst in rushing this project through was the upcoming National Teach-in on the Vietnam War that was expected to draw many faculty and students to Washington and where Cooper’s boss, McGeorge Bundy, was scheduled to debate an as yet unidentified representative of the academic community. Thus, though only on 1 May had Cooper brought Fishel and Dupuy together “to develop a plan for utilizing the HERO staff” for the Vietnam publication, by 7 May a memorandum from Dupuy stated that the first draft of the new publication was “being

---


9. Ibid., p. 194.


11. I was asked in a letter of 6 May 1965 by HERO’s Colonel Dupuy to become a member of the editorial board of his projected publication, presumably because he knew nothing of my views on Vietnam. Furthermore his original intention was to entitle the envisaged publication, Southeast Asia Information Report, because (as he wrote in his letter of 3 May to Wesley Fishel), among other things, “the intellectual, opinion-forming audience for whom this letter will be intended might be inordinately suspicious of a letter concentrating on Vietnam only.” Probably the fact that my own publications had been almost entirely confined to Indonesia made it plausible for him to invite me (and two of my former graduate students who specialized respectively in Malaysia and the Philippines) to serve on this board. So rushed were Dupuy’s plans that he sent me, along with his letter of invitation, copies of a relevant internal memorandum, budget, and his letter of 3 May to Fishel. (I declined Dupuy’s invitation and had no further communication from him.)

12. Memorandum for Valenti from Chester Cooper, The White House, Subject: The American Friends of Vietnam, (CC Bundy), 5 May 1965, 3 pp. I acquired this document well over a decade after these events from the L. B. Johnson Library in Austin, Texas. The memorandum indicated that additional “informational output” beyond the publication here discussed was also being arranged.


15. I was invited to debate McGeorge Bundy only about a week in advance of the National Teach-In through two friends at Yale, Harry Benda and Mary Wright, partly on the initiative of members of the Council for a Livable World (a group of politically concerned scientists) who seem to have been well-impressed by my success in debating General Edward Lansdale in a private session on U.S. Vietnam policy held under the aegis of the Council in Washington a few months before. Credit for organizing the National Teach-In should, as I recall, go primarily to Marshal Sahlins and some of his colleagues at the University of Michigan.
prepared under absolute ‘crash’ conditions in the hope that distribution can begin before the coming May 15 ‘teach-in in Washington.”16 (As it turned out Bundy did not take part because he was called to oversee the new U.S. intervention in the Dominican Republic; he designated Robert Scalapino of the U.C. at Berkeley to take his place.)

Despite the speed of preparation of the new journal, which bore the name Vietnam Perspectives, it was handsomely printed. Only the American Friends of Vietnam was indicated as publisher, and its members made up the editorial board. There was no mention of HERO. The price was indicated as 75 cents, but unsolicited copies flooded the offices of faculty in many universities, and I never found anyone who had actually paid for one. Ten issues were prepared under absolute ‘crash’ conditions in the hope that distribution can begin before the coming May 15 ‘teach-in in Washington.”16 (As it turned out Bundy did not take part because he was called to oversee the new U.S. intervention in the Dominican Republic; he designated Robert Scalapino of the U.C. at Berkeley to take his place.)

It was presumably the public outcry against Nixon’s invasion of Cambodia in 1970 that brought a reorganized American Friends of Vietnam to commence publication of a successor journal, Southeast Asian Perspectives. With William Henderson of Socony Mobil Oil as editor, this had the same format as its predecessor. Its price was still 75 cents and unsolicited, gratis copies again deluged academics. Its first issue of March 1971 was entirely devoted to a forty-eight page article by Douglas Pike, “Cambodia’s War.”17

While I am in accord with the second and especially the third prescription in Bruce Cumings’s conclusion, I must disagree with his suggestion that the social sciences be abolished and grouped under the one heading of “political economy.” One can, I think, justifiably criticize the often artificial divisions among the social sciences, and the cramping and unimaginative parochial vested interests that are frequently built up among each of them without resorting to that expedient. I don’t deny the value of political economy as an approach to an understanding of a good many important matters, but I don’t think it can effectively subsume all existing routes to an understanding of all important matters now dealt with by the social sciences.

Certainly it is very important to “get the intelligence and military agencies out of free academic inquiry,” but abolishing the CIA alone would not achieve this. The Defense Intelligence Agency and other Defense Department operations have probably been equally culpable in trying to influence the course of academic inquiry. Abolishing the CIA alone could easily result in simply shifting its objectionable functions to the Pentagon. Accountability is the central problem, but political leaders and a media intimidated over the possibility of being branded unpatriotic have not yet seriously pressured Congress to abandon its feckless, proforma charade of oversight of the covert activities of either the CIA or Pentagon.18 And as yet no president has been inclined to eliminate an instrument that, despite its sullied record and continuing futility, is responsive to his own initiatives in a way that can usually shield him from public scrutiny and ultimate responsibility.

On the basis of my own experience, I believe Bruce Cumings’s main thesis should be qualified in so far as Southeast Asia is concerned.

17. Mostly a discussion of the internal struggle in Cambodia, it found Nixon’s invasion and the continuing South Vietnamese military operations within that country “resoundingly successful” (p. 23) and gave no hint that he and Kissinger helped pave the way by supporting Sihanouk’s ouster.
18. Probably Congress’s last major retreat from responsibility for monitoring covert action came on 31 January 1989 when Speaker of the House Jim Wright announced at the beginning of the Bush administration that as “an opening gesture of good faith on our part” he was shelving legislation that would have required the president to notify Congress of any covert operations within forty-eight hours. Thus Congress permitted to stand the elastic provision sought by the CIA (and its old boss George Bush) that the White House need only consult Congress in a “timely” fashion when launching a covert operation. Though the focus of concern was covert direct or indirect military activity emerging from the recent Congressional investigation of the Iran-Contra operation, this Congressional retreat clearly has implications attaching to the whole range of CIA activities.
I like Bruce Cumings’s ruminations on his own career because by implicating himself in what he describes he shows how the personal is historical. The primal scene where Cumings—to his everlasting hurt—is rebuffed by John King Fairbank opened my eyes about why this moment was so key to the Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars generation. Cumings’s despair at the disingenuousness of a Fairbank who knew yet refused to acknowledge Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) filiations at Harvard, and the lingering sadness Cumings says has remained with him as a consequence of this betrayal, helped me to respectfully understand the burden of homo sociality for a generation of radical scholars educated in Asian studies at elite schools. The men that Fairbank radicalized did important counterhegemonic work during some pretty tough political times. They did it by and large together, and Cumings’s disclosures reinforce the truth that emotional ties among men are a significant part of the social history of dissenting generations in U.S. intellectual life.¹ As his essay struggles to make clear, individuals lived out bits of the social code, whether they met expectation or not. The dissenting generation of elite social scientists in regional studies in the United States has had to cope with the burdens that academic privilege imposed. Like Cumings, the best of them are still working to unlearn this privilege as a personal loss.²

¹I am grateful to Donald M. Lowe for his assistance and criticism. Mark Selden also worked with the essay and enriched it; my thanks to him and to the editorial group of the Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars for inviting me to contribute to this discussion.

²This is not to overlook the significant contributions of female activist-scholars in the early years, and the women founders of the Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars and its Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars: Leigh Kagan, Cheryl Payer Goodman, Cindy Frederick, Helen Chauncey, Molly Coye, Kathleen Gough, E. Patricia Tsurumi, Gail Omvedt, Phyllis Andors, Brett de Bary, Vera Schwarcz, Saundra Sturdevant, Nina Adams, Jayne Werner, Martha Winnacker, Felicia Oldfather, and Marilyn B. Young.


Cumings’s spooky analysis of the University of Washington’s Jackson School of International Studies is wonderful. The insight that George Taylor, Karl Wittfogel, and Raymond Allen either ratted on to the CIA or got investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) nudges Cumings away from extreme self-righteousness in the face of the evil of other people. It paves the way for his intelligent discussion of what it means to be an insider at the very funding agencies, primarily the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) and the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS), he very properly seeks to expose now. As I read his major point it is simply that scholars can do independent, even counterhegemonic, work in the face of institutional-political constraints.

Cumings is less nuanced when it comes to interpreting motivation. It strains my credulity that the muchachos (Fred Y. L. Chiü’s category for violent compradores) are accountable only to force. Overclearity here obscures a more complex reality that probably included pleasure and pain, desire as well as fear, and preference and evasion. I think there is probably a lot more to be said about the reasons why people suborned themselves. They may just have wanted to be insiders at Georgetown dinner parties.⁴ Even so, I agree with Cumings that the social, ideological, affective forces normalizing these behaviors do not excuse them. Also, it is not really okay to let sleeping dogs lie. Cumings may be only half right about the motives in play, but he is not wrong about the need to open up the archives and render the judgments.

Two more queries follow from Cumings’s insistence on raising the issue of why earlier generations of scholars abdicated their responsibilities. These are the critic’s ability to stand outside the events of the times and what mediates economic and social change. Cumings retrospective glance says to me that the ideological state apparatus is unrelenting. There exists no exterior or privileged place where an elite cadre of clean radicals can present an agenda that is untouched by the world’s worldliness. That is part of what “hegemony” means. Cumings’s essay is a

that he, too, is limited in what he can do by conditions not of his own making.

His illustrative story about Northwestern University and the Mellon Foundation foundation grant for research on human rights and democracy puts personal anecdote squarely into troubled social text. Here Cumings implies that debates over human rights and his own recent paid participation in one such debate, may somehow implicate him in more policy adjudication. He is right, in my view. When Hillary Clinton goes to Beijing and speaks about women's human rights at the alternative NGO forum, more is at stake than simply her own personal feelings. Human rights and particularly the slogan “women’s rights are human rights” are both part of the Clintonian political imaginary, the ideological arm of Clinton’s aggressive neocolonial foreign policy. And yet that does not disqualify the slogan per se, or make it any less useful to growing thousands, perhaps even millions, of women all over the world who with their male allies are mobilizing their communities to advocate for their own human rights but who are not interested in making a model of Hillary Clinton.

These scholars express the view that transnationalization is not a “thing” that can be excoriated, or made into an object that critics can control or change. Each begins from a more modest understanding that critics of late capital must be present and accountable but cannot expect medals for doing what we do.

4 I myself would not draw such a line at all, but that is probably another thing that distinguishes Cumings’s position from mine.

There is a rough equivalence in how Cumings approaches both globalized entities, the discourses of human rights and late capital. Just as he has a bit of difficulty distinguishing among discourses of transnational capital and the thing—capital—itself, Cumings also hesitates in his understanding of whether international human rights discourse is just a U.S. State Department offensive in neocolonial economic consolidation, or partly that but partly something else, or whether it is in fact a popular language of resistance to neocolonialism, inside and outside the United States. It occurs to me that the problem might lie with how he is reading these materials. Obviously not every citation of human rights has U.S. policy implications; sometimes a cigar really is just a cigar . . . and sometimes it is not. Simple empiricism does not suffice, as Cumings would be the first to point out.

Cumings’s call for action in the face of proliferating discourses of globalized capital is fairly standard scholarly practice by now, particularly outside area studies properly speaking. Yet my respectful view is that a revived political economy approach is not going to wholly accommodate the current pace of change or even really come to terms with what the global capitalists are doing these days. Nothing I see in this short article would help me to plan a course in which students investigate the data flow that administrators, international lawyers, patent-seeking scientists, public health officials, and others are thinking about when they say globalization. The mantra Cumings sounds at the end of his article—the specter of transnational corporations, the demand that all political economy be organized around them—is a little formulaic and, I’ll argue in a moment, a little too clear.

At the University of Washington (where Cumings was and I am now) the Economics Department has long since been overridden by the Business School, the Schools of Medicine, Forestry, Marine Affairs, Engineering, and Public Health, all insisting on the “privatization” of scholarship. A 23 November article in the Seattle Post-Intelligencer (PI), by Imbert Matthee, the PI’s “special Pacific Rim correspondent,” entitled “UW Center of Asia-Pacific College Web, APEC EduNet will promote study, research,” describes ratification of electronic links among the U.S. State Department, the departments of state of the Philippines, Chile, South Korea, Thailand, and Indonesia, and corporate entities including International Business Machines, Microsoft, Weyerheuser, and the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Corporation for a “virtual university” to be located in the University of Washington’s Jackson School of International Studies.

What exactly Cumings wants his brand of critical scholarship to do about this new reality is unclear. And why an exclusive interest in the corporate motor? In the course that I teach on neoliberal feminisms and the discourses of internationalization I note at least two distinct sets of arguments. One, emerging from funded scholarly publication projects, is part of a neocolonial project of advocating Robin Morgan–style transnational sisterhood that establishes common ground in the “postsocialist market economy.” Another, a more critical and creative set of arguments forwarded by scholars like Donna Haraway, Noel Sturgeon, Akhil Gupta, Aihwa Ong, Inderpal Grewal, and many others, looks at transnationalism in social, discursive terms. Each of these scholars expresses the view that transnationalization is not a “thing” that can be excoriated, or made into an object that critics can control or change. Each begins from a more modest understanding that critics of late capital must be present and accountable but cannot expect medals for doing what we do.

Actually, “transnationalized” scholarship of a nonreductive sort, that is, scholarship about the social effects of transnational capitalism, is already available even in areas very close to Cumings’s own; South Asian diasporic farmers in the case of Grewal, South and Southeast Asian capitalists in Ong’s case, and populist agrarian movements in India in the case of Akhil Gupta. A forthcoming special issue of positions, guest edited by Elaine Kim and Lisa Lowe, makes a strong case for the transnational capitalist underpinnings of the rearticulation of Asian-American communities and forms of politicized scholarship. While none of these studies focuses directly on corporations, they all assume the role of economic formations in the shaping of the social text and choose to approach this obliquely through scholarship on everyday life in unequal globalized relations. This emphasis actually tends to trouble Cumings’s vision for area studies.
Cumings says that he does not want to end area studies because only strict regional focuses ensure competency in language and culture, and because his major antagonists, rational choice theorists, are buying expertise from natives. Preoccupied with this new international division of labor, Cumings’s fixation with SSRC’s potential mediating function tends to limit his vision of alternatives already available. Outside the statist framework where he has labored, often heroically, are Marxists, post-Marxists, and social democratic critics who are both natives and scholars. Some were trained in the United States, and perhaps even received SSRC funding for all I know. But they are not the sort of scholars Cumings is describing since many do not even reside primarily inside the United States, for example the scholarly networks publishing in *Taiwan: A Radical Review of Social Science*, or *Isle Margin*, Ch’angjakkwa bip’yong, and the *Hong Kong Cultural Studies Bulletin*. Or they publish with presses that are not dependent on war-planning models in which a large team is assembled and a research project mapped out that would require SSRC funding. Or they get interested in the category of “area studies” (by which they usually mean a haphazard mixture of what Cumings properly distinguishes as area studies and international studies), but are attracted to it precisely because it is so heavily contested at the moment. Others work in nation-states that have only marginal importance to the metropolitan core, such as Australia, Singapore, India, and New Zealand, where the vocabulary of “cultural studies” is a common medium. Also, some critical immigrant scholars reside in the United States and are still active in journals in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Stockholm, Tokyo, Seoul, Shanghai, Xinjiang, and other places.

Cumings’s article raises one final question about thinking on a social grid. It does not, in my view, sufficiently distinguish Cumings’s own position from Mary Brown Bullock’s in “Why the Study of Asia Should be a National Priority.” Both scholars resist the dissolution of area concentration that ending SSRC funding implies, and they both assume that area studies is the only place where language and cultural geography are properly taught.Implicitly in his case, explicitly in hers, each supposes that area studies will always be national studies, state financed and largely controlled by a stable of native-born scholars on government stipends, whose loyalties are unimpeachable because they consist primarily of allegiance to the nation rather than the corporation.

The overlap may stem from Cumings’s apparent unwillingness to open up for discussion the basic assumptions structuring his discussion. Certainly he traps his discussion in an opposition that makes nation and corporation, national and international, a married couple. But there is more to the method question than that. Cumings is relying on a complex logic. If you are for area studies or you are against language instruction, you are against rational choice or you are for ignorant scholarship, you are for recognizing the exigencies of funded scholarship or you are against good scholarship, and so on. At each step in this argument there is increased pressure to join the author in once again policing the boundaries of what he believes ought to be the appropriate or proper area studies. His
reasoning is based, as he acknowledges, on displacement, that is, he knows what a real area studies would look like if the "boundary displacements" could be overcome, true boundaries instituted, and scholarship properly calibrated. My problem with this kind of logic is its conservatism. Once the term boundaries is invoked I find it difficult to understand whether the boundary is there to remind us of the area's proper place in academic scholarship, or as a way of screening out eruptions of political scholarship that lie outside area studies proper but might actually enrich it if area studies were defined a little more liberally.

Overclarity here obscures a more complex reality that probably included pleasure and pain, desire as well as fear, and preference and evasion. I think there is probably a lot more to be said about the reasons why people suborned themselves.

What sort of eruptions am I alluding to? Well, there is the growing presence in the United States of racialized, ethnicized minority populations within national state boundaries. We now understand that minoritized or abjected "others" are the fixed ground, the stable place where majoritized elements erect a sense of themselves. The racialized or otherwise minoritized subject lives alongside the ideological, singular national subject, for instance (thus the importance of a Patricia Williams who is the great-great-granddaughter of a black slave and a white slaveholder), the dominant race, the hegemonic sexuality and so on. The presence in the academy of scholars who work on the questions of racialization, ethnicization, engendering, subject lives alongside the ideological, singular national subject, for instance (thus the importance of a Patricia Williams who is the great-great-granddaughter of a black slave and a white slaveholder), the dominant race, the hegemonic sexuality and so on. The presence in the academy of scholars who work on the questions of racialization, ethnicization, engendering, racialization of Asian and Asian-American scholars in Asian studies, to take just one possible project, are a legitimate part of area studies after all. Maybe the boundaries of area studies are not being displaced but are rather being recoded or reconfigured. Perhaps before herding the cattle back into the barn, "we" need to figure out how the work of drawing boundaries rests on dynamics that may themselves be racialized. Would Cumings's reconstituted SSRC consider as "area studies" a project that examines Korean and Korean-American community networks among settler communities in San Francisco, Seoul, and Seattle? How about second generation Vietnamese-Chinese-American capitalist women's investment networks in Seattle, Honolulu, Manila, and Ho Chi-minh City? And where is the critical, potentially counterhegemonic impulse in such research?

Eruptions are directly traceable to the flow of capital but not reducible to it, and here I am thinking about the funding scandal at Berkeley. News reports and professional exchanges underplay its potential as a symptom of many of the questions that Cumings is raising. For instance, Asian money is being coded in much discussion as contaminating in a way that British, German, or Canadian money is not, thus feeding the already virulent racism that polices investment politics in the allegedly transnationalized United States. Analyses have yet to surface that can criticize capitalist influence-peddling but demur at collapsing capital into local, racialized, nationalized categories like "Taiwanese money." It is important to accept the real conditions of late capital, come to terms with symptoms like the Berkeley incident, and accept the fact that area studies is no longer just a U.S. concern. Then it may be possible to work out in detail strongly argued, persuasively analytic, epistemic, theoretical, and empirical rationales for taking progressive scholarly positions in area studies.

Though less apt to offer sweeping, programmatic solutions, some journals—the Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars; AMPO: Japan-Asia Quarterly Review; Feminist Issues; South Asia Bulletin: Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East; Gender, Culture, and Society; Amerasia Journal; Diaspora; Social Text; as well as positions—are increasingly publishing area-specific experimental work. My point here is that while such projects depend on the electronic media (that is, are an effect of the transnational corporation, to say nothing of being its major supply line) what is driving the communications initiative is new scholarship. Scholarship is already registering the effects of the cybernetics of transnational capital.

In the end my response to Bruce Cumings's concern about clarity and boundaries is this: looking back is a cleansing gesture, but it cannot compensate for looking at the present and the way that structured violence—past and ongoing—conditions immediate scholarly politics now. Clarity and boundaries may be only part of the picture. No thinking person could ignore our epoch's transnational drive toward global commodification or delude himself/herself into thinking these processes might be rolled back.6 The heavily saturated cultures of transnational capitalisms with their flexible semiotic codes may prove unamenable to a straightforward political economy approach and its nostalgic dream of clear boundaries, autonomous social scientists, transparent social categories.7 Unreconstructed political economy often finds itself unable to visualize the points of resistance, the cultures with a small "c" that Ernesto Laclau talks about. That is how strict political economy approaches sometimes overlook counterhegemonic work among the educated, privileged elites as well as the achievements of the smart, angry natives. These are places where persistent criticism is already apparent. Perhaps a reconfigured international and area studies could begin by considering the value of this established body of persistent criticism as a means of framing "our" research. At the very least I hope that those of us working in institutions housing area and international studies can stretch boundaries to the breaking points, and even share the burden of our thorough expertise with scholars and communities outside the national scope of SSRC/ACLS. Nothing should be off the table in these times.

7. For critiques that make a similar case by way of disparate empirical material, see essays by Fred Chiu, Diane Dorfman, and Andrew Barshay in positions, vol. 4, no. 2 (fall 1996).

© BCAS. All rights reserved. For non-commercial use only. www.bcasnet.org
Contra Ideocracy

by Moss Roberts

Like much Cold War jargon, “civil society” as an idealized description of the forums and other “spaces” of U.S. intellectual life amounts at best to half the truth. The universities, the various presses, and the newspapers function by and large in a zone partly under state and partly under civil control, the mix and the quality varying case by case. Most of the dominating Asian studies institutes and departments in the United States have been functioning in tandem with the state’s intelligence services for the past half century. Cherished assumptions about academic life in general—“pluralism,” “marketplace of ideas,” “civil society”—have precious little validity in the Asian studies, virtually none in the Chinese studies, context—a top-down model as “Chinese” as China is said to be. Bruce Cumings’s splendid little monograph shows when and how the groundwork for this state of affairs was laid. In a sense leading U.S. official scholars in the China field seem to have aspired to the status of Grand Mandarins, the scholar officials of imperial China, though usually without much flair for the cultural diversions of poetry, calligraphy, and landscape painting.

One recently declassified State Department document dated April 1965 indicates the strength and scope of governmental interest in external academic research; the document is called “Statement of the Position of the FAR [Foreign Areas Research] China Subcommittee on External Research Priorities.” (Is there such a subcommittee for other Asian countries?) This document from the Secretariat of the External Research Staff of the Department of State opens with a preamble on the relation of government to outside scholars:

[The] Subcommittee believes that non-governmental research on contemporary China can be of definite assistance to the government’s own research . . . providing independent assessment of problems . . . and filling gaps in information which government agencies are unable to fill without expanding their internal research capabilities. . . . The following list includes potential research projects through which outside scholars could make a substantial contribution directly complementary to the government’s internal research program.

The FAR document has two lists. The first marked “Primary Interest” identifies four topics (ethnic groups, particularly those in border areas; evaluation of educational and scientific materials; foreign relations and economic relations; and development of science and technology). The second, marked “Secondary Interest,” lists eighteen specific subcategories.

In China, as in France and Japan, a large state role in education has been overt; here it is often covert. The spring 1965 documents were concealed for thirty years. In a culture that accepts such a role for the state one knows the limits and tries to work within and around them. In the United States with its traditional aversion to such a governmental role (or is it denial?), many scholars might take offense at any suggestion of dependency as a challenge to their independence as thinkers. Yet leading official scholars, who often deliver polemical and indignant analyses of the role of the state in China or (less severely) Japan, seem, in my experience, well-trained not to think about the kind of empirical evidence for the U.S. context that Bruce Cumings presents.

The case for serving a policy has to be made rather than assumed. Otherwise, keeping government and the academy separate is a safe rule of thumb (real pluralism protects a base for independent thinking).

In the above circumstances Marx’s disturbing formula that Being Determines Consciousness becomes unexpectedly relevant, and doctrines of freedom of thought and even free will come under suspicion. Claims of the official scholars to objectivity are also at risk. Under the code of candor disclosure of self-interest (too gently called “conflict of interest”) is widely understood as an obligatory form of intellectual honesty, indeed

1. This and three related documents from spring 1995 are reprinted on pp. 56 to 59 of this issue of the Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars (BCAS). They were also circulated on the internet (Chinese Studies List) on 19 April 1995, and they should be available soon in the BCAS online archive.
as a precondition for objectivity. During the persecution and prosecution of the U.S. Left in the fifties the issue of candor was crucial. Educators became vulnerable to criticism and dismissal for not disclosing their political ties and beliefs (perhaps the original Catch 22). If you were hiding something, you were not fit to teach, the line went, particularly if it was a left point of view or organizational affiliation. In the late sixties and early seventies when the official China scholars responded to the Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars (CCAS) and other critics’ queries by denying the obvious links between their overfunded centers and the intelligence agencies, they were in violation of the code of candor. (No one mentioned the relevant spring 1965 documents from the State Department.) Yet Bruce Cumings’s research brings to light some anxiety over this violation: in the words of one Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) president concerning CIA funding for MIT’s Center for International Studies (quoted in Cumings): “I have a strange animal instinct that this is a good time to get ourselves tidied up.” In the late sixties and early seventies there was plenty of stonewalling but not much coming clean.

Many of the questions Cumings poses are not fully answerable for want of documentation. For example, Harvard files, which are sealed for fifty years, may contain pertinent data. The prevailing pattern has been one of concealment, secrecy, and resistance to having the field organized in an open democratic manner. This is why in 1959 the relatively open Association for Asian Studies (AAS) (“civil society”) was rejected as the bureaucratic housing for funding scholarship and organizing conferences in the China field; instead the central committee for the modern field, the Joint Committee on Contemporary China (JCCC), was created and placed in the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) (the state). Moreover, this was done conspiratorially, in violation of the vote of the founding committee of SSRC. On 5 May 1965 William J. Nagle, chairman of FAR, wrote to the FAR members that “the JCCC provides a natural focal point for liaison with the academic community.”

This kind of elitism widened and institutionalized a gap between a few insiders and the large number of teachers and scholars pursuing a whole range of research, some potentially critical of policy, some with little policy relevance. Based on this gap there has arisen the false idea of policy expertise based on access to special bureaucrats, agents, and secret information. But the Vietnam War and U.S. China policy were not going to be solved by the “best and the brightest” with their access and funding and special conferences. What was needed was intelligence and thoughtfulness exercised in free and open debate. CCAS was formed in 1968 to create such a debate, because it could not take place in the academic field as it was then controlled and organized. There were and are many citizen scholars in Asian studies capable of dealing far more sensibly with Asian policy problems than the official scholars. (Even now public media comment on China is restricted to a very small number of approved voices and rarely goes beyond divisions of opinion in government and business elites.)

How can we measure the actual damage to the cause of freedom of inquiry and expression in the United States by the subordination of an academic calling to governmental imperatives? I would answer, by studying the voices and the issues

---

excluded. Consider for example the aborted career of John Service, a learned, humane, and principled, but politically incorrect, scholar and government servant. Many a lesser figure, placed in high position at a major university, became a shaper of the field, active in the right committees, money for the right conferences, key links to Washington, budget for themselves, and the like, while Service languished in a minor position and had little institutional influence in the China field. Nothing better illustrates the dependency of the academy on political and governmental interests than Service’s exclusion. Yet the fifties and sixties were a time when a breath of rationality about the Chinese revolution was desperately needed in the United States. It did not come from the official scholars. Later, and too late, when relations with China changed, Service was rehabilitated. His “official” respectability was restored, but he acquired no institutional influence.

A major figure like Edgar Snow was rarely if ever welcome at the elite centers. Other scholars and writers of intellectual distinction and substantial accomplishment were excluded from influential university faculties and committees, or simply lost their jobs—a fine political scientist here, a thoughtful and talented economist there, an excellent Koreanist. Even a small degree of independent-mindedness could destroy a career in Asian studies.

In addition to excluded individuals, there are the excluded issues, the issues best avoided in processing a Ph.D. at a “major center.” Here are a few for-fun titles: (1) Analyze the system of bribery and election-rigging by U.S. officials and cutouts in postwar Japanese society; (2) Discuss the role of clandestine U.S. military operations launched against China from Taiwan, Thailand, and Japan in the shaping of U.S. strategic diplomacy: how did such operations influence Chinese diplomacy, strategy, and attitudes? (3) Discuss the funding patterns for Asian studies in the United States, with special reference to covert and overt conduit systems used for Taiwan government (Kuomintang) funding in the period 1945 to 1997; compare and contrast China Lobby funding with U.S. government agency funding in terms of purposes and actual effects; (4) Research Indian and other foreign critiques of U.S. policy against China in the early fifties; (5) How closely does actual research at the elite centers match the 1965 State Department lists of priority research topics? In the formative period (for China studies) covered by Cumings’s research, how many in-depth studies of topics 1-5 were made; what were the career outcomes of those who pursued them?

Finally, what about the larger question of intellectuals in the service of the state? Confucius explores it throughout the Analects, and comes to grips with its perils and contradictions most directly in book 18. His judgment was, “For me there is no [absolute] acceptance or rejection (wu ke, wu buke).” I don’t feel entirely comfortable with Cumings saying “I am by no means a purist on these matters, and see nothing particularly wrong with scholars offering their views on policy questions.” (Presumably Cumings means in a governmental context.) Such off-hand phrasing walks past too many questions and is less thorough than the Analects, book 18, though maybe it’s not fair to hold Cumings up to Confucius (without advance warning). One has to think through whose agenda (and whose money) one is serving, what is the context—as Cumings himself has demonstrated. The flap over Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation “funding” is a recent case in point. For me, the case for serving a policy has to be made rather than assumed. Otherwise, keeping government and the academy separate is a safe rule of thumb (real pluralism protects a base for independent thinking). At present elites circulate through academia and the agencies as a norm, and if the state is less interested in maintaining those structures in their current form and at lavish funding levels, perhaps this is the ideal moment for other “states” well integrated into the U.S. empire to step in with their own special agendas. Korea Foundation, Japan Foundation, and Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation funding is one element in this changing but consistent pattern. To address the present developments and the history out of which they come is the beginning of academic freedom in Asian studies.
Bruce Cumings is correct in pointing out that efforts to enhance the United States' knowledge base as a means of limiting the growth of communism provided the motive forces behind not only federal but much of foundation support of area studies scholarship in the post–World War II period. This funding produced not only the specific programs at Harvard, Columbia, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and the University of Washington that he mentions, but a vast array of other area programs at other universities, as well as support for the training and research of many individual scholars.

Prominent among programs that came out of this effort was the Ford Foundation’s Foreign Area Fellowship Program. After an initial decade under direct management of the foundation, that program was transferred to the auspices of the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) and the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS). As grant agencies those bodies acted, if Cumings is correct, as “mere window dressing” to disguise the fact that the program was an agent of what he calls the “state/in­elligence/foundation nexus” (hereafter “the nexus”). Among the beneficiaries of that program were more than two thousand foreign area scholars, including many leading figures in contemporary area and international studies life, one of whom was Bruce Cumings.1 Cumings went on to serve as an SSRC staff member at a time (1969–70) when, according to his analysis, SSRC was virtually a wholly owned subsidiary of “the nexus,” deriving approximately 80 percent of its funding from the Ford Foundation’s international programs.* He was also one of the many beneficiaries of the National Defense Foreign Language Program (NDFL), another central funding mechanism for this project of the “nexus.”

Is there a difference between, on the one hand, Cumings’s association with the project of the “nexus” through his receipt of an NDFL Fellowship, a Foreign Area Fellowship, and his membership on SSRC staff and committees, and, on the other hand, the associations with the “nexus” that Cumings says Allen and Taylor at the University of Washington were involved in? Clearly there is. The programs Cumings took advantage of were guided and constrained precisely by the kinds of “procedural” mechanisms to protect academic independence and integrity that he denigrates; the excesses of Allen and Taylor were unconstrained by such protections.

The real importance of what happens at a “local point” such as SSRC is not just mobilizing of funds for training and scholarship but also assuring that procedural protections for academic independence and scholarly merit are present and enforced in the terms under which those funds are accepted and disbursed.

What is SSRC’s function in the post–Cold War period? To continue to try to mobilize funds for the training and research of young, internationally oriented scholars and to continue to protect against any efforts that established or new funders might undertake to compromise scholarly independence and merit criteria. In the face of dramatic cuts in resources from domestic funders, one of SSRC’s challenges has been to negotiate grants from foreign funders—such as the Center for Global Partnership and the Korea Foundation—in ways that protect academic independence and merit. Elsewhere Cumings has appropriately de­cried the inadequacy of such procedural protections in the relations of some American scholars and universities to the Korea Foundation.2 Battles for just such protections have been and continue to be crucial behind-the-scenes activities at SSRC.


It was as a part of that kind of battle that I wrote the review and analysis of the National Security Education Program (NSEP) that Cumings quotes. It is sad to divert discussion of an important issue for post-Cold War scholarship—the relationship between scholarship and power and money—into a rehash of a program that has become marginal, misguided, and essentially inconsequential, but let me briefly correct Cumings’s account.

Cumings falsely asserts that I—and by extension, SSRC—did not defend independent academic inquiry as essential in itself, did not evince the importance of “international and area studies apart from what the state (let alone the ‘intelligence community’) may want,” and left “the impression that any funds of such size are ipso facto worth having.” He is demonstrably wrong on all counts. In the first paragraph of the article, I specify that my effort was to try to “find ways to assure that its defining and implementing provisions are consistent with the canons and criteria of scholarly integrity and excellence.” A central element in the canons of scholarly integrity is scholarly independence, including selection of topics, theoretical perspectives, and methodologies. I also make clear that my article was being written “to identify minimum requirements for scholarly integrity and quality for such a program,” and that the question of whether NSEP funds were worth having would, in the case of SSRC, be decided by referring the question to the governing bodies of the council if “the financial, statutory, regulatory, and personnel provisions for implementation of the program seem to meet those minimum requirements.”

In fact, SSRC’s board determined, even before the provisions for implementation of the program had been finalized, that they were sufficiently flawed that the council should not even enter into discussions and negotiations about its possible participation in the program. SSRC, in short, came down on the same side of the issue as Cumings.

Cumings is also wrong in attributing the more recent cuts in the size of the NSEP trust fund to Gingrich’s chain-saw approach to cutting budgets. Rather, they were the result of efforts of defense and intelligence hawks—led by C. W. Bill Young, Republican of Florida—to kill the NSEP, which they view as worthless to defense and intelligence interests. Senator Paul Simon, retiring democratic senator from Illinois, saved half of the trust fund, but made a fatal compromise on the service requirement. Whereas the original provision that award recipients should serve in “education or government” seemed well within the natural career progression of many candidates, the Simon compromise requires that they serve in government “agencies having national security responsibilities.” Though better than Young’s language, this remains an intolerable intrusion on academic independence and integrity, and should be unacceptable to any serious scholar or scholarly institution.

Cumings implies that changes now under way at SSRC are simply designed to make that organization the handmaiden of “the global corporation” and “national security bureaucrats.” This is patent nonsense, which he supports with the kind of guilt by association (SSRC uses the same “buzzwords” as the Clinton administration) that the anticommunist right used to tar liberals as communist sympathizers (both advocated “peace”). He repeats in print scurrilous gossip (“some say that the SSRC has been teetering on the edge of bankruptcy for several years”) that is demonstrably falsified in the public record, a tactic that is not worthy of a reputable scholar.

Cumings’s recommendation would presumably be to let SSRC—and with it the support it generates for training of scholars grounded in area knowledge—wither and die because it does not raise funds based on “the corporate identity of the university.” Having financed his own graduate training and field research from federal and foundation funds, he would presumably close down Title VI and the new Mellon Foundation-funded, SSRC-administered, dissertation field-research fellowship program. He would, as well, presumably eliminate or relegate to business schools all social science that does not fit within his privileged mode of political economy analysis. So much for new generations of area-trained scholars and teachers; and so much for academic freedom in the social sciences.

The real importance of what happens at a “local point” such as the Social Science Research Council is not just mobilizing of funds for training and scholarship but also assuring that procedural protections for academic independence and scholarly merit are present and enforced in the terms under which those funds are accepted and disbursed.

Cumings should, in fact, embrace the changes underway at SSRC. As he notes, “most area specialists [are] not interested in” the “rare interdisciplinary intellectual program” that has been “made possible” by “area programs.” He is devastating in his critique of the “hidebound, narrow scribblers” who populate many area programs. The SSRC reforms are designed precisely to strengthen, enrich, and draw younger scholars into interdisciplinary intellectual programs that are grounded in area studies. It will be demonstrations of these programs’ intellectual, scholarly, and educational returns—and yes, their relevance to the world’s problems—that will persuade funders to sustain and build area studies training programs. And it will be regrant organizations such as SSRC that, if they continue to do their jobs well, will assure that such funds are provided to scholars in ways that protect their intellectual freedom, independence, and integrity.

3. Cumings misrepresents my article and my views in other particulars: by writing that I said Boren “decided” (rather than made “an effort”) to strengthen the credibility of the program by putting its administration under the Defense Intelligence College (DIC), he creates the impression that I thought the DIC would add credibility to the program (which I clearly did not). By writing that I said the DIC retained a “nominal” role in the program, he suggests that I accepted and tried to downplay a DIC role. In fact, as I said was likely to happen, all references to any DIC role were deleted in amendments passed within months of my writing. 4. See Amy Margo Rubin, “National Security Education Program Changes Controversial Service Requirement,” The Chronicle of Higher Education, 4 Oct. 1996, p. A50.
In its conception, the CIA is very much a work in progress, where we work the world. The main factor is secrecy, clandestinity. All of it taken together is as wonderfully simple and as amazingly complex as modernized each day. It is a highly individual, ever-changing, creative, dynamic, exciting way of life.

"We conduct our activities and ourselves according to the highest standards of integrity, morality and honor and according to the spirit and letter of our law and Constitution." - Credo, Central Intelligence Agency

It is not insignificant personnel, CIA operations officers, communicators and secretaries are unlikely to be removed during such emergencies.

Students receiving grants through the National Security Education Program as amended in 1995 and 1996 are required to either repay the full amount of their awards or do work in fields related to national security unless such work is unavailable. This collage of materials reproduced directly or quoted from Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) recruiting material gives an inkling of the nature of one type of such work. Should those responsible for mobilizing these funds seek provisions to ensure that their programs are consistent with scholarly integrity and excellence, or is such funding an intolerable intrusion on academic independence and integrity that should be unacceptable to any serious scholar or scholarly institution? This collage is reproduced with permission from a larger collage that appeared as a centerfold in the CovertAction Information Bulletin (Washington, D.C.), vol. 38 (fall 1991), p. 34-35, an issue focusing on the subversion of higher education.

© BCAS. All rights reserved. For non-commercial use only. www.bcasnet.org
I find Cumings’s article limited in its utility and questionable in its accuracy. The utility of the paper is limited by too little analysis of what happened in the past, too little examination of current trends, and unrealistic and unreasonable recommendations. Accuracy is very desirable in an article that aspires to examine the complex of state-foundation-academy interactions related to area and international studies, and in the part of the article I have been asked to respond to this required accuracy is sadly absent.

I will limit my comments to the accuracy of Cumings’s account of the Association for Asian Studies (AAS) and my “participation” (his term) with the National Security Education Program (NSEP). He faults AAS for not making an advance public condemnation of the NSEP, and he states that I, as secretary of AAS, was acting as a salesperson for the NSEP, primarily concerned with “getting the money.” In both cases he is wrong.

Cumings notes that three area associations, the Middle Eastern Studies Association (MESA), the Latin American Studies Association (LASA) and the African Studies Association (ASA) all passed resolutions against the NSEP. These three area associations consider political action as a part of their function (for example, LASA sends observers to elections in Latin America). I do not know the details of their constitutions, but it is my impression that their boards of directors can pass association resolutions without a membership vote.

In contrast, the AAS tradition is to remain nonpolitical, and it requires a rather long and expensive process to pass a membership resolution. It requires a quorum of 2 percent of AAS members to vote on a resolution at the annual business meeting, and then a mail ballot to all 8,000 members to vote on the resolution. Resolutions are the norm for MESA, LASA, and ASA, but are not the norm for AAS.

Regarding “participation” in the NSEP, all five area associations—AAS, MESA, LASA, ASA and Slavic Studies, joined together in the National Council of Area Studies Association (NCASA)—“participated” to exactly the same extent. Anne Betteridge, the executive officer of MESA, and I took part in a meeting in March 1992 sponsored by the Association of American Colleges. NCASA invited Martin Hurwitz of the NSEP to meet with us at our annual NCASA meeting in Chicago in April 1992. To the best of my knowledge, none of the area associations, AAS included, had any contact with the NSEP beyond the above, and we shared whatever rumors, information, and documents came our respective ways. It was a joint, and very limited, NCASA operation.

For the record I will provide a brief account of AAS (and my) actions regarding the NSEP, and will send full documentation to Cumings and to anyone else who requests it. In March 1992 I was invited to a meeting to discuss the NSEP, sponsored by the Associations of American Colleges noted above. All documents I collected, including the text of the National Security Education Act, plus the resolutions of the other area associations, and my notes from the above meeting, were discussed at the AAS board of directors meeting in late March. The board directed me to continue to gather information on the NSEP, through NCASA, and to inform the AAS membership about the NSEP in the AAS publication, the Asian Studies Newsletter. I was also directed to draft a letter to Senator Boren regarding objections to the location and provisions of the NSEP. This draft was to be submitted for board consideration at their fall meeting, after which I was to inform the NSEP regarding the sense of the board, which mirrored the concerns expressed by the resolutions of the other area associations.

In April at the annual meeting of NCASA we invited Hurwitz and his assistant to meet with us. In addition to the secretaries—executive officers of the five area studies associations, the five association presidents were also invited to attend, and the president of AAS, Tetsuo Najita, attended this meeting. We collectively and individually raised our objections to the NSEP program, primarily its location in and control by the Department of Defense, but also key provisions regarding work requirements, oversight, and program direction. Hurwitz seemed uninterested in and unimpressed by what we had to say.

After this meeting none of the area associations, AAS and myself included, had any additional contact with the NSEP. President Najita and I drafted a letter to Senator Boren, again seeking removal of the NSEP from the Defense Department. This letter was discussed and revised in November 1992 at the fall meeting of the AAS board of directors, and it was

© BCAS. All rights reserved. For non-commercial use only. www.bcasnet.org
eventually sent to Senator Boren in March 1993. The delay in sending the letter was due to recurrent rumors that the incoming Clinton administration was going to change the NSEP and solve all the problems. The text of this letter was printed in on p. 7 of the April–May 1993 issue of the Asian Studies Newsletter, and it is reprinted below on the next page.

The November–December 1992 Asian Studies Newsletter reprinted an excellent summary of the NSEP developments by Stanley Heginbotham of the Social Science Research Council, reprinted from their publication, *Items*. This was the final mention of the NSEP matters in AAS, except for the publication of the letter noted above.

Let me turn to an even less accurate part of Cumings’s discussion of AAS and the NSEP—my role. Cumings lapses into a strange sort of tabloid journalism in which he selectively draws on the Asian Studies Newsletter of June–July 1993, pp. 3–6, using incomplete quotations out of context, placing his own underlined emphases, inserting unattributed quotations from other sources, making snide parenthetical remarks, and concocting conclusions authoritively listed by number to document his own skewed view of reality. Far from being a “fair reading” of the newsletter discussion, it is an inaccurate, misleading, and somewhat pointless interpretation. I challenge Cumings to append the full newsletter account, including Anne Betteridge’s discussion, and let the reader decide if Cumings’s selections and conclusions represent a “fair reading.”

---

There was no attempt made to “get the money” (how would we get it, and for whom?), no attempt made to sell the NSEP to our membership, and we were certainly committed to changing the location and control to place it outside the intelligence-defense community. Cumings will have to look elsewhere for sinister agents and organizations.

---

Regarding the NSEP, it is my contention that AAS, and I as their representative, acted in a responsible fashion, even if it does not agree with what Cumings believes should have been done. Membership was provided with all the information on the NSEP that we had, and AAS worked with the other area associations to inform the NSEP of our collective objections and to make recommendations for changes that would make the program more acceptable. There was no attempt made to “get the money” (how would we get it, and for whom?), no attempt made to sell the NSEP to our membership, and we were certainly committed to changing the location and control to place it outside the intelligence-defense community. Cumings will have to look elsewhere for sinister agents and organizations.

Cumings’s article seems to get sidetracked by what appears to be excessive concern for SSRC/ACLS activities, as well as for the general welfare of political economy. It is regrettable that he did not follow up his concern for the NSEP by examining what has happened to this program. How are the funds being used, who is getting supported, what problems have emerged? Did the negative reaction (including by AAS) that marked the early stages of NSEP discussions have any effect? Is the NSEP now supported by new players in the international studies arena who are less concerned with access to the field and overseas colleagues? Are those “participating” in the NSEP simply greedy, or has the end of the Cold War changed perceptions about what is “acceptable”? Is this a “fast forward” to an unchanged set of relationships, or is it a new game with new rules? There is a lot going on out there, and it requires more thoughtful analysis than is provided by Cumings’s selective coverage, and a much more sophisticated blueprint than is provided by his recommendations.

---

*We are not appending the full newsletter account here due to its length, general availability in libraries, and similarity to the AAS letter by Tetsuo Najita that we have included on the next page. —EDs.*
Dear Senator Boren:

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Association for Asian Studies, I would like to write to you regarding our hopes and concerns for the David L. Boren National Security Education Program.

The Association for Asian Studies, with an international membership exceeding 7,000 scholars, is the largest learned society in the world specializing on Asia and represents almost 80% of the Asia specialists in the U.S. in academic and related fields. The AAS cannot speak for all Asianists, but we do represent an informed cross section of Asia specialists. All would agree that Asia will dominate the next century and that Americans are inadequately educated to understand Asia and meet the competitive challenges posed by Asia's dynamic economic growth.

There is no question that your farsighted initiative to increase knowledge of other nations is the most important development in international education in this generation. Because of its vital importance to international education, we have been reluctant to suggest changes in your National Security Education Program which in the previous administration could not be implemented because of the impossibility of shifting budget items. However, we hope that the advent of a new administration may present an opportunity to transfer funding for the NSEP out of the Department of Defense, and establish the Boren program as a free standing entity, or attached to an appropriate agency, where it can realize its full potential.

There is no question that its continued close identification with the defense-intelligence community will seriously limit the scope of the NSEP and preclude it achieving its full role in international education. In many of the most critical and neglected areas of Asia, access to field work and study, and productive relationships with colleagues, will be seriously curtailed by the defense-intelligence identification. In the post-Cold War world the problems posed by linkage with the defense-intelligence community will probably increase, fostered by heightened nationalism, increased xenophobia, competitive pressures at all levels, and even democratization and press freedom. Many nations will be inaccessible to NSEP students and scholars, often those most important to repairing our international knowledge and competence.

We recognize that a central concern of your program is that federal agencies, including defense and intelligence, have access to an increased number of well trained language and area specialists. We feel that these goals will be far better served if NSEP students and scholars can undertake their study and research in all parts of the world, and not be limited to those very few nations who will be willing to accept students and scholars sponsored by a program located in the Department of Defense.

We write now because we hope that the new administration in Washington, with leadership focused on change and on enhancing America’s international competitiveness, will be able to overcome the structural budget barriers, and thus be able to increase the effectiveness of your very important initiative in international education by separating it from the Department of Defense. This is a rare opportunity to create the most valuable education program for international studies for the next half century.

Sincerely,

Tetsuo Najita
President
Association for Asian Studies
Robert S. Ingersoll
Distinguished Service Professor
University of Chicago
Asian Studies, Ideology, and the National Security State:
Articles in the Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*


*Our thanks to Tom Grunfeld for compiling most of this list, and to Mark Selden for joining us in adding to it. Please note that we have not checked for relevant material in the CCAS Newsletter after it became a separate internal publication, that is, after vol. 1, no. 3 (March 1969). —Eds.


"The Funding of China Studies, Continued"; two CCAS resolutions and correspondence from Ezra Vogel; in vol. 5, no. 1 (July 1973), pp. 74-77.


Special Section: "Debate on Social Science and the Study of Modern China"; two articles each by Roger Boardman and Edward Friedman; all in vol. 6, no. 2 (Apr.-Aug. 1974), pp. 2-26.


© BCAS. All rights reserved. For non-commercial use only. www.bcasnet.org
Documents Relating to Government-Academic Liaison

These documents were discovered by Jim Peck when he was perusing recently declassified State Department papers. Because my photocopies of the original documents are of too poor quality for publication, I have had them typed into the computer. Should anyone desire to see the photocopies of the originals, I will be glad to provide them.

I believe these documents to have a twofold importance. First, they shed new light on the research and debates on government-academic liaison, which the Columbia chapter of the Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars and I conducted in the late sixties and early seventies. Second, in my opinion these documents bear significantly on recent and current discussions that have gone on inside and outside the Asian field concerning the topics of “civil society” and “state intervention in civil society.”

Moss Roberts, March 1995

FOREIGN AREA RESEARCH COORDINATION GROUP
(FAR)

Secretariat:
External Research Staff
Department of State
Room 8840

Statement of the Position of the FAR China
Subcommittee on External Research Priorities

April 1965

1. General Statement

The Subcommittee believes that non-governmental research on contemporary China can be of definite assistance to the government’s own research efforts, by providing independent assessment of problems relating to that area, and by filling gaps in information which government agencies are unable to fill without expanding their internal research capabilities.

2. Research Topics of Primary Interest

The following list includes potential research projects through which outside scholars could make a substantial contribution directly complementary to the government’s internal research program. Government agencies may, as the occasion permits, be able to support research projects of this kind.

   a. Preparation of a detailed study of ethnic groups, particularly those in the border areas of China
   b. Qualitative evaluation of educational and scientific materials published in China
   c. Compilation of handbooks on the foreign relations and economic relations of China
   d. Analysis of the development of science and technology in Communist China.

3. Research Topics of Secondary Interest

The following list includes potential research projects through which outside scholars could make a useful contribution indirectly complementary to the government’s internal research programs. Government agencies might encourage and, to the extent possible, cooperate with outside scholars who undertake projects of this kind.
a. Analysis of the relationship between Chinese Communist theory and practice in regard to
   (1) foreign relations, (2) domestic administration, and (3) economic development
b. Analysis of the shifting pattern of loyalties amongst family, village, province, personal associations,
   and State
c. Analysis of the role and status of middle-echelon bureaucrats, technicians, and managers
d. Evaluation of the status of the social sciences in China
e. Analysis of the psychological basis of Chinese behavior, with special emphasis on the adjustment
   of individuals to various economic and political situations
f. Analysis of the monetary and banking system in Communist China
g. Analysis of the system for the allocation of human resources in Communist China
h. Identification of an “operational code” useful in explaining Chinese Communist elite behavior
i. Analysis of the Chinese Communist leadership’s view of the United States and the world situation
j. Analysis of overlapping areas of Chinese and American national interest
k. Analysis of the course of the Sino-Soviet dispute, especially as reflected in Sino-Soviet rivalry in
   third countries
l. Analysis of the attitudes of the overseas Chinese regarding developments in Communist China
m. Compilation of annotated bibliographies of publications on Communist China in non-Western
   languages
n. Compilation of an up-to-date Atlas of contemporary China
o. Compilation of comprehensive physical geography of China.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

IN REPLY REFER TO: INRXR
May 4, 1965

MEMORANDUM

TO: Wm. J. Nagle
   Chairman
   Foreign Area Research Coordination Group (FAR)

FROM: S. William Mullany (signed)
   Executive Secretary, FAR

SUBJECT: Statement of the Position of the FAR China Subcommittee on External Research Priorities

As you know, the FAR China Subcommittee decided at its first meeting in May 1964 to draw up a list of external research topics which would reflect the needs of all Foreign Area Research Coordination Group agencies engaged in research on China. I am pleased to submit the final report of this effort, the “Statement of the Position of the FAR China Subcommittee on External Research Priorities.”

This report results from the initial impetus given the China Subcommittee in April 1964, when at its first meeting the FAR group approved the establishment of “a subcommittee of government China specialists representing the government foreign area research community.” At that same meeting Alan Whiting, subsequently appointed Chairman of the China Subcommittee, made the following recommendation to the FAR group in his remarks on government-sponsored research: “What I am suggesting is that external research focus on researchable areas of inquiry and avoid those areas where our governmental strengths are most evident. . . . I would like to suggest that government-sponsored research avoid contracts for those areas that we do best.”

Among the chief responsibilities assigned the China Subcommittee by the FAR group was to “prepare a tentative list of government research needs on Communist China.” Since the concern of FAR is contract research rather than in-house studies, the subcommittee determined that its list of research needs should attempt to identify specific projects which might most appropriately be performed by the non-government research community. Furthermore,
as stated in the July 1964 minutes of the Subcommittee, the list “will represent long-term research needs as seen by government, but which are not likely to be undertaken by government. The private researcher would be free either to take up some of these topics or to reject them and go his own way. The list will be a broad guideline and not a document which could be construed as dictation either to the private community or to government agencies.”

Acting upon the parent Group’s recommendations and its own collective judgment, the Subcommittee thus began an intensive survey of FAR member agencies. In a pioneer effort to determine external research needs on an interagency basis, this survey entailed much more than a poll or compilation of suggestions. A list of suggested topics was but the first step in a continuing series of individual contacts, Subcommittee discussions, refining and redrafting. Past research experiences, the existing literature, on-going and planned research within government, the known resources of the private research community, and advances in research methodology had all to be taken into account.

The statement which emerged is thus a unique document in that for the first time government research specialists have acted in concert to reach agreement on research needs of vital concern to all of government. I respectfully recommend it to your attention and to the attention of all FAR members.

THE FAR CHINA SUBCOMMITTEE:

Allen S. Whiting -Chairman. Department of State
Fenton Babcock -Central Intelligence Agency
Robert Barendsen -Department of Health, Education and Welfare
Charles Hutchinson -U.S. Air Force
Thomas S. Lough -U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency
Col. Kent Parrot -U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency
Kenneth Roberts, Jr -Office of the Secretary of Defense, International Security Affairs
Joseph J. Sullivan -U.S. Information Agency

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

INR/XR

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the FOREIGN AREA RESEARCH COORDINATION GROUP (FAR)
FROM: Wm. J. Nagle (signed)
Chairman, FAR

SUBJECT: Statement of the Position of the FAR China Subcommittee on External Research Priorities

For some months the FAR China Subcommittee has been engaged in drawing up a list of external research topics related to China of priority concern to the government research community. The attached statement is the final draft of this list and represents, in effect, a report of the China Subcommittee to the FAR Group.

The statement includes two lists which identify research topics of primary and secondary interest to government. Although the topics are cast in terms of specific external research projects, they have been formulated only after careful consideration of the in-house research programs and plans of FAR member agencies. From the point of view of the FAR research administrator, the statement can thus furnish quite specific guidelines on government-wide research priorities and gaps.

Copies of the statement will be sent to the chairman of the Joint Committee on Contemporary China of the Social Science Research Council-American Council of Learned Societies for comment. The JCCC provides a natural focal point for liaison with the academic community, and we believe the reaction of its members will be valuable
with respect to specific China research projects. We intend also to circulate the report widely throughout the non-government research community concerned with China studies.

FAR members are urged to consider the relevance of the statement to over-all FAR goals, and to address to the Secretariat comments on its usefulness as a research planning tool. Your reactions will be of special significance to other FAR subcommittees now planning their activities for the months ahead.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
THE DIRECTOR OF INTELLIGENCE AND RESEARCH
WASHINGTON

May 18, 1965

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. McGeorge Bundy
Special Assistant to the President
The White House

You may be interested in the attached position statement recently drawn up by the China Subcommittee of the interagency Foreign Area Research Coordination Group (FAR). The statement is a unique attempt to identify government-wide research need on China in terms of specific projects which might best be performed by the academic research community. As a pioneer effort in interagency research cooperation, I believe it will serve as a useful model for other FAR subcommittees now undertaking similar tasks.

(initialled)
Thomas L. Hughes

Attachment

**

INTERESTED IN BECOMING A NEW SUBSCRIBER? OR DO YOU KNOW SOMEBODY WHO IS?
We are now offering our new subscribers two free in-print back issues of their choice for every year of their subscription!

BACK ISSUES AT BARGAIN PRICES!
BCAS is now selling slightly damaged back issues for $2.00 per copy! We have a great selection and guarantee that all copies are in good condition.
Review Essay: 
Reinscribing the Globe—
Imaginative Geographies of the Pacific Rim

by Ravi Arvind Palat

Once upon a time, not so very long ago, Europeans and their transplants in the “new worlds” of the Americas and Australasia reigned triumphantly over all they surveyed. After the Mughal emperor was made a pensioner of the British East India Company, and the Celestial Empire reduced to a shadow without substance, the peoples of Asia—like all others of non-European descent—were conceptually consigned to perpetual inferiority. They were the “peoples without history,” their historical experiences and patternings of sociopolitical arrangements ignored by the analytical categories of the modern social sciences that remained theoretical encapsulations of the northwest European patterns of long-term, large-scale social change. Even the Japanese, citizens of the first non-European state in modern times to embark on a colonial adventure of its own, were treated with paternalistic solicitude—“the West’s obstreperous offspring,” as Dean Acheson called them after their pretensions to world power lay smoldering in the thermonuclear ashes of Hiroshima and Nagasaki—and seen as second-rate Westerners, no more than manufacturers of shoddy imitations of European products.

These verities were rudely shattered over the last two decades by transformations in the geopolitical ecology of production, trade, and investments. As waves of plant closures and layoffs swept across the older industrial heartlands of Europe and North America, and many rapidly industrializing low- and middle-income states in Latin America and Eastern Europe collapsed as swiftly as they had risen, economies along the Asian and North American perimeters of the Pacific continued to post consistently high rates of growth, apparently confirming one of the lesser known prophesies of Marx and Engels: that the “center of gravity of world commerce” would shift to the Pacific. This sea change in the socioeconomic topography of the contemporary world has spawned a burgeoning literature on the region, variously called the “Pacific Rim,” “Pacific Basin,” “Asia-Pacific,” and even the “Euro-American Pacific.”

Deep chasms—disciplinary, substantive, and theoretical—separate the authors represented in the three books under review here, even as they engage with and contribute to this literature from very different vantage points. In Coming Full Circle (CFC), Eric Jones, Lionel Frost, and Colin White insouciantly reconnoiter the economic history of the Americas and East and Southeast Asia over several millennia to situate the present in terms of the...
past. In contrast to this longitudinal perspective, the authors assembled in the Global Production (GP) anthology give us a latitudinal view of a single manufacturing sector—the garment industry—since the end of the World War II from Thailand to the Caribbean, tracing the changing configurations of trade, investment, production, and labor migrations. In both cases a specific disciplinary or thematic focus gives an overarching coherence to the analyses. The other volume considered here, What Is in a Rim? (WR), is in a category apart. Envisaged as a critical examination of the term “Pacific Rim” from a variety of disciplinary lenses, it seeks to question a concept that enjoys wide currency in scholarly and popular writings on the contemporary world economy. Differences in theoretical orientations and substantive focuses among the contributors also set this volume apart from the others: rather than providing a bird’s-eye view of the region like Coming Full Circle, or a comprehensive account of a single industry like Global Production, chapters in What Is in a Rim? range over a wide terrain, seeking to illustrate the complexities that are all too often blithely swept under the carpet.

The title Coming Full Circle suggests an outright rejection of a thesis advanced by one of the book’s coauthors over a decade ago: that “economic growth” was a unique characteristic of Europeans. However, even a cursory glance quickly dispels this impression. The central premise advanced by the present book is that only the unfettered development of the market and the creation of national institutions to safeguard its operations from undue political interventions can guarantee economic growth and prosperity. Consequently, rather than seeing the appearance of major nodes of accumulation along the Asian perimeters of the Pacific as an indicator of capitalism becoming an authentically global abstraction when peoples of non-European descent begin to make distinctive contributions to its narrative for the first time, they merely attribute the rise of these economies to their successful adaptation of institutions pioneered by European states—the nation-state and the market.

From this viewpoint, not only do the historical and contemporary experiences of the inhabitants of the Asian “miracles” remain excluded from the theoretical categories of analysis, but the costs of the high rates of growth on women, the working class, ethnic minorities, and even the environment are passed over in silence. Despite the book’s historical dimension (more about this below), it is thus a part of the cascading torrent of policy papers and journalistic accounts about the region that hold it up as the example for other, less resolute “developing” states to follow. Since the focus is on how “certain societies have taken a leadership role in economically integrating significant parts of the Pacific” (CFC, p. 6), this volume is almost exclusively concerned with those economies that have recorded high growth rates in recent decades—California, Japan, China, and the “Four Dragons” (Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea, and Taiwan). The states of Latin and Central America and Australasia that have all declined relative both to the East Asian “miracles” and to the core states of Europe and North America figure only parenthetically, while states such as Cambodia, Laos, North Korea, and Vietnam—not to speak of the islands scattered across the ocean—do not even make a cameo appearance.

The historical depth provided by Coming Full Circle is especially welcome since most accounts of the Pacific Rim are resolutely focused on the present and are quite unable—as suggested by the widespread usage of the term “Asian miracles”—to account for the peculiar ability of several economies strung along the coasts of the Pacific to maintain consistently high rates of growth amidst a general collapse of most other low- and middle-income states.

Authors of two chapters in What Is in a Rim? subscribe to this positive, almost hagiographic, evaluation of the Asian “miracles.” Victor Castillo and Ramón de Jesús Ramirez Acosta suggest that the creation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) will lead to a replication of the “Asia-Pacific or Japanese model of development,” as the maquiladoras (industrial zones controlled by transnational corporations) of Mexico “represent ideal sites for a global production process that is no longer containable within boundaries of nations or even of regions” (WR, p. 82). In this rosy scenario, rules-of-origin clauses of NAFTA will compel major U.S., Japanese, and South Korean corporations to extend their subcontracting networks to Mexico, thereby enabling it to follow in the footsteps of the Four Dragons, which prospered due to their incorporation within Japanese subcontracting networks. In a parallel chapter, Chen Xiangmen argues that the creation of export processing zones in China indicates the emergence of a series of overlapping “subregionalized” economies that merge the respective competitive advantages of the coastal and border provinces of China with those of its neighbors for their collective benefit.

Notwithstanding these aberrant chapters, other contributors to the two anthologies take a decidedly more critical view

2. “A political system that encourages market-based behavior by appropriate taxation and the provision of public goods is a common feature of historical instances of economic growth. Weak or corrupt rulers who overtax or underinvest (or both) create serious disincentives for merchants and peasants, which are usually sufficient to smother the prospects of intensive economic growth,” (CFC, p. 162, emphasis in the original).
of the Asian “miracles.” Chapters in *Global Production* seek to investigate the increasing fragmentation and transnational integration of production processes through an analysis of the garment industry. This sector is particularly suited for this purpose as it is often the first to become established during the process of industrialization and encompasses the most advanced as well as the most backward forms of industrial organization. Additionally, as the editors—Edna Bonacich, Lucie Cheng, Norma Chinchilla, Nora Hamilton, and Paul Ong—observe in their introduction, it represents “a point of entry for immigrant workers to advanced-industrial countries from the developing world” (*GP*, p. 15). Employing commodity chains as their principal indicator, a series of comparative essays and case studies sensitively map the changing configurations of apparel manufacture in the Caribbean, East and Southeast Asia, and the United States. These essays exhaustively document the adverse impact of processes of industrial restructuring on workers, particularly women and ethnic minorities—the lack of legal protections, the patriarchal control exercised by fathers and foremen being replicated on the factory floor by managers and foremen, long hours of work for a fraction of the male wage, work in family-based sweatshops in addition to their waged work in factories and continued domestic responsibilities for women, and the discrimination faced by ethnic minorities in Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, and elsewhere. When the decline of manufacturing in the United States is routinely attributed to dumping and other “unfair” trading practices adopted by corporations based in Japan and the Dragons, this analysis is particularly noteworthy for highlighting the role of U.S. retailers in fostering offshore production. The heavily weighted bias towards the U.S. market is not, however, without its pitfalls, and we must wonder how an account that equates Japan with North Carolina (same number of index entries for both) and accords both less significance than the Caribbean can ever be presumed to represent an analysis of the Pacific Rim.

*What Is in a Rim?* resists a deft encapsulation precisely because, with the two exceptions noted above, its chapters are united more by their critical posture toward the discourse on the Pacific Rim than by a shared theoretical orientation or thematic focus. Sited at the crossroads between the humanities and the social sciences, and between several disciplines and area studies, its chapters span an impressive array of issues—multiple tensions in regional construction and globalization of the networks of material and cultural production, imagery of “Asia-Pacific” and its underlying realities, shifting patterns of labor migrations and local cultures as sites of resistance—pluralizing, demystifying, and interrogating reigning orthodoxies. This multipronged examination of the Pacific Rim does not yield a new imaginative geography like the other volumes. By privileging human interactions over cartographic representations, it exposes the theoretical vacuity and analytical irrelevance of the concept as the ongoing processes of capital restructuring remaps the geopolitical ecology of the world.

---

Rather than providing a bird’s-eye view of the region like *Coming Full Circle*, or a comprehensive account of a single industry like *Global Production*, chapters in *What Is in a Rim?* range over a wide terrain, seeking to illustrate the complexities that are all too often blithely swept under the carpet.

---

As these thumbnail sketches suggest, these books cater to very different constituencies and extend, refract, or otherwise amend the discourse on the Pacific Rim from very different vantage points. Rather than summarizing their contents—which, in any case, cannot be satisfactorily done given the large numbers of contributors to the two volumes and the range of disciplinary and substantive concerns broached in *What Is in a Rim?*—I will focus successively on the major motifs of each volume: historical roots of the Pacific Rim; sociopolitical consequences of the ongoing respatialization of production networks; and the role of culture in regional integration and localized resistance. Finally, I will attempt to indicate questions for further research posed by these contributions to the literature on the Pacific Rim.

**Reading History Backwards**

Insisting that regions are structured not by physical features and locational contiguity, in *Coming Full Circle* Jones, Frost, and White trace the structuring of the Pacific region from the early migrations that peopled its coasts and islands, through the constitution of the ocean as a distinct entity on world maps when Europeans and their transplants in the Americas charted its coastlines, to the rapid growth of economies along its Asian and North American perimeters and their increasing integration through flows of labor, commodities, and capital in recent decades. The historical depth provided by *Coming Full Circle* is especially welcome since most accounts of the Pacific Rim are resolutely focused on the present and are quite unable—as suggested by the widespread usage of the term “Asian miracles”—to account for the peculiar ability of several economies strung along the coasts of the Pacific to maintain consistently high rates of growth amidst a general collapse of most other low- and middle-income states. Inevitably, specialists of particular chronological eras or geographical segments will dispute many discrete details and specific interpretations in this sweeping...
Rather than jousting over historical minutiae, my concern is with a broad interpretative scheme of the book with particular reference to East Asia. Though this economic history of the Pacific Rim over the *longue durée* dissipates the aura of obviousness that is often attributed to the region in much of the literature, *Coming Full Circle*'s analytical power is severely constrained by the authors' tendency to universalize a model of socio-historical transformation derived from the particular experience of northwest European societies—their assumption that autonomous progress towards laissez faire capitalism is the "natural" pattern of evolution for all human societies. The adamant refusal to entertain the possibility that different historical social systems may possess distinctive dynamics of social change renders them incapable of investigating the specificity of societies based on wet-rice cultivation.

As indicated by the retrospective reconstruction of regional economic history in *Coming Full Circle*, its apparent catholicity masks a series of exclusions, marginalizations, silences: that the people who inhabit the lands fronting the Pacific are not equal participants in the activities that structure the region and in the discourse surrounding it.

Thus the authors of *Coming Full Circle* purport to explain the absence of tendencies toward the accumulation of capital and patterns of technological evolution akin to the experience of early modern European societies in China to the lack of adequate institutional features to reduce transaction costs (*CFC*, p. 33). This interpretation obscures the dynamics of change in societies based on irrigated rice cultivation: that the technical requirements of production led to a progressive diminution in the unit of cultivation; that the smaller dimensions of rice fields led to the substitution of simpler tools for heavier implements; that the smaller dimensions of rice fields led to the smaller dimensions of human structures; and that the ability of lands under wet-rice cultivation to support high densities of population led to an elaborate division of labor-saving machinery.7 The greater productivity of agriculture also meant that potentates were less reliant on urban aristocracies for the means to maintain credible claims to provide protection than political operators in Europe.8 Hence they were under no pressure to create conditions favorable to the greater subordination of labor.

The failure to analyze the specific socio-historical dynamics of change in East Asia also leads Jones and his coauthors to present Chinese history, after the "technological revolution" of the Song (960–1280 A.D.), as a history of stagnation, "put[ting] on fat, not muscle" (*CFC*, p. 28). The ensuing insular portrait of the Chinese economy excludes from its field of vision the growth of extensive sectoral and regional interdependencies generated by increased yields of food grains through intensive wet-rice agriculture. Given the paucity of coinable metals in China, these expansive networks of trade were increasingly predicated on inflows of bullion and copper from outside the empire, and the extent of this dependence can be gauged from the catastrophic consequences that resulted from a reversal of these flows due to opium imports. In this light the real significance of the Qing emperor's famous snub to Lord Macartney in 1799 was not that it signified a closed economy, but that Western powers did not yet possess the capacity to force open the doors of the Middle Kingdom. Contrary to what authors of *Coming Full Circle* would have us believe, the European assumption of their "innate superiority over technically inferior people" (*CFC*, p. 41) did not extend to the great agrarian empires of Asia till the industrial revolution unalterably changed the balance of power.

In their celebratory account of laissez faire capitalism, Jones and his coauthors enthusiastically endorse the forcible opening of China and Japan to Western trade, hailing it as breaking the stultifying confines of tradition and stagnation. There is no place in their discussion for the adverse consequences of the treaty ports and informal colonialism on the Chinese economy. Consequently their explanation for the contrasting experiences of China and Japan since the mid-nineteenth century is reduced to a recitation of Japanese virtues: "Japan is a society that thinks exhortation works" (*CFC*, p. 102); its success "stemmed in part from a better preparation for development than in other non-Western countries" (*CFC*, p. 103); Japan "plunged into world trade naked, and its industries, forced to keep warm, had to produce at world market prices" (*CFC*, p. 104); "Workers accepted the need for rigorous quality control" (*CFC*, p. 108); "there is in East Asian companies a willingness to look further ahead than Western firms" (*CFC*, p. 110). In this exoticization of Japan, this ascription of a heroic national will to develop, there is no mention of the role of the colonization of Korea, Manchuria, and Taiwan in Japanese industrialization, of the massive waves of labor unrest in the early decades of this century, of the subcontracting system that excluded the majority of workers from the lifetime employment system and thereby preserved labor peace in a heterogeneous labor market, of the privileged access to U.S. markets long enjoyed by Japanese manufacturers, of the large

The dominance of Japanese transnational industries in Southeast Asia can be seen in this photo of a busy thoroughfare in Bangkok, Thailand, in 1992—note the Technics billboard and the quantity of Nissan and Suzuki vehicles and billboards! Focusing on the benefits of laissez faire capitalism and Japan’s national will to survive and capacity for work, Coming Full Circle does not mention the many other factors contributing to Japan’s high-speed economic growth. Similarly, some chapters in What Is in a Rim? stereotype the Japanese as a homogenous people and consequently conceal serious stratifications and fissures within Japan and promote a binary Japanese-versus-American approach that feeds both elites in Japan and Japan-bashers in the United States. This photo is by Sean Sprague, Impact Visuals, and it is reprinted here with permission.

Infusions of US funds during the Korean and Vietnamese wars, of the relative autonomy of the post–World War II Japanese state, and a host of other factors—of all the factors, in fact, that created extremely favorable conditions for high-speed economic growth in Japan. Conversely, China’s failure to achieve comparable rates of growth is attributed to the installation of a centrally planned model (CFC, pp. 125–27). There is no recognition of the enormous gains registered by the Chinese economy in the twenty-seven years after liberation relative to the only economy comparable to it in size—India. Perhaps most telling, precisely because an explanation rooted in neoclassical economics cannot account for the disastrous performance of most Latin and Central American states, these states and the Philippines and other low-income economies on the Pacific perimeters of Asia are conspicuously absent from the latter part of the book celebrating the “miracle” economies. Hence, despite the purported comprehensiveness of this volume, it creates an imaginative geography that excludes a large part of the lands fronting the Pacific.

To summarize, though the authors of this retrospective reconstruction of the economic history of the Pacific Rim recognize that the trans-Pacific integration of a multiplicity of relational networks is a recent phenomenon, their projection of the geopolitical divisions of the post–World War II era (East and Southeast Asia, North, Central, and Latin America) into the distant past disembodies these areas from the larger contexts in which they were embedded and hence distorts their internal structuring. Their teleological assumption that laissez faire capitalism is the goal of human history prevents them from examining the specificity of the socio-historical dynamics in these several precapitalist systems. Finally, their deep immersion in neoclassical theory precludes an analysis of the adverse impact of high-speed economic growth on workers, particularly women.

and ethnic minorities, in the “miracle” economies. Indeed, their tendency to reify states is tantamount to a refusal to examine the differential impact of industrialization on classes, genders, and ethnicities.

Notwithstanding these reservations, this is a lucidly written book, and even those who are as skeptical of its theoretical claims as I am will find it a rewarding read: where else will an Asianist encounter such juicy morsels of information as that the Mayas had independently discovered the concept of zero (CFC, p. 50)?

Changing Socio-Spatial Dynamics of Production

Unlike neoclassical theorists who ascribe the rapid industrialization of economies along the Pacific perimeters of Asia to their sequential adoption of laissez faire policies, contributors to Global Production stand in a different tradition, viewing these installations of factory complexes as integral moments of a singular process of capitalist restructuring that also involved the deindustrialization of older industrial zones in the United States and Western Europe. The distinctiveness of the present volume derives from its exhaustive analysis of global sourcing in the garment industry. This narrower focus enables them to illuminate the consequences of the transnational integration of production in several sites—in the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Hong Kong, Mexico, and Central America, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, and in the United States—in considerable detail.

While the impetus toward a cross-border expansion of industrial production after World War II stemmed from the institutional scaffolding of U.S. hegemony—the installation of a “free enterprise” system enabling corporations to bolster their competitive positions by exploiting wage and cost differentials across jurisdictional frontiers—and affected all manufacturing sectors, chapters in Global Production silhouette three distinctive characteristics of the garment industry with uncommon clarity. First, unlike many other sectors (for example, automobiles, computers, consumer electronics) in which the transnational expansion of production was spearheaded by large, vertically integrated U.S. corporations, retailers played a major role in the global sourcing of garments. Two important corollaries follow from this feature. As Edna Bonacich and David Waller suggest, instead of pricing goods according to their costs of production, retailers initially priced them according to what the U.S. market would bear (GP, pp. 83–85). Given the wide differentials in price between the United States and economies along the Pacific seaboard of Asia in the late fifties when offshore sourcing was initiated, this implied that suppliers in Japan and the Dragons derived substantial profits by pocketing the difference between their costs of production and the prices U.S.-based retailers were willing to pay. As their familiarity with local conditions of production increased, the retailing giants were able to relentlessly drive down procurement prices, particularly since these “buyer-driven commodity chains,” as Richard Appelbaum and Gary Gereffi (GP, p. 44) call them, were extraordinarily flexible since they were not burdened by fixed investments in plant and equipment. The consequent emergence of complex, spatially dispersed, hierarchically structured subcontracting networks in which no supplier provided more than 4 or 5 percent of the procurements of large retailers not only implied a constant downward pressure on wages, but also that new suppliers did not reap the windfall profits that had accrued to suppliers in the late fifties and early sixties.

Sited at the crossroads between the humanities and the social sciences, and between several disciplines and area studies, the chapters of What Is in a Rim? span an impressive array of issues pluralizing, de-mystifying, and interrogating reigning orthodoxies.

Second, policies adopted by the U.S. government to protect jobs by restricting imports through quotas spurred the spatial dispersal of these subcontracting networks as suppliers in the Dragons—the “quota refugees,” in the words of Rosalinda Oferneo (GP, p. 163)—expanded their own procurement webs to jurisdictions with unfilled export quotas and large reservoirs of low-wage, tractable supplies of labor. Accompanied as this spatial extension was by a fragmentation of production and the greater subordination of labor, the process of industrial expansion led to the creation of jobs in both the new and old sites of manufacture at highly exploitative rates, particularly since workers and lower-level subcontractors lacked alternative avenues for employment and access to credit, training, markets, and so on (GP, pp. 175–76). In these conditions, far from industrialization denoting “development,” it signified a relentless downward pressure on wages and a growing polarization in income and wealth both within the “newly industrializing countries” and between many of these jurisdictions and the core.

Finally, the dislocations caused by the globalization of production in peripheral and semiperipheral locations—particularly the spread of the U.S. agro-industrial model and the resultant expropriation of peasants—led to a massive increase in the flow of migrants from these areas to the United States after the partial relaxation of discriminatory immigration restrictions in 1965. These flows have had a disproportionate impact on the


A young worker attaching pockets in a blue jeans factory in Hong Kong. Global Production provides an exhaustive analysis of global sourcing in the garment industry, viewing the installation of factory complexes along the Pacific seaboard of Asia in the late fifties as part of a capitalist restructuring that also involved the deindustrializing of older industrial zones in the United States and Western Europe. The book documents the adverse impact of processes of restructuring on workers, particularly ethnic minorities and women such as the young worker in this picture: the lack of legal protection, the patriarchal control, the long hours of work at a fraction of male wages, and so on. This photo is by and courtesy of Janet W. Salaff, and it is from her Working Daughters of Hong Kong (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 280.

Restructuring of the garment industry in the hegemonic power as U.S. producers have increasingly resorted to employing the new immigrants in conditions reminiscent of nineteenth-century sweatshops and thereby worsened conditions for the native-born, predominantly white working class (GP, p. 346). The consequent recomposition of the labor force has fractured the solidarities of long-established working-class communities and led to a severe round of labor disciplining in the main centers of the garment industry—California, New York, and the southern states.

Though chapters in this anthology offer arresting insights into the operations of brand-name marketers—like Nike, Reebok, Liz Claiborne, and The Gap—two serious errors mar this collection. Its very pronounced U.S.-centric focus completely obscures the pivotal role of Japanese corporations and their subcontracting networks in regional integration. However important U.S. retailers may have been in nurturing garment production along the Asiatic perimeters of the Pacific, an exclusive focus on the linkages they established results in a highly skewed depiction of this sector in these locations that also provided about 26 percent of European imports (GP, p. 4). These issues are compounded by an absence of any analysis of the linkages established by large East Asian firms and subcontractors with low-wage producers in places as far away as India and Zimbabwe.

Perhaps most importantly, in an effort to ensure thematic coherence among the large number of contributors to this volume—twenty-eight from six countries—all the case studies deal with a common set of issues. Despite the wealth of detail, they read very much alike: change a few dates, proper names, and percentages, any one could be substituted for any other. By emphasizing thematic coherence, it appears that the contributors to this volume have dissipated an excellent opportunity to examine the impact of globalization on localized structures of community and power or to study the local processing of global tendencies by delineating the shifting contours of culturally sanctioned patterns of authority and deference: they have sacrificed local specificity at the altar of thematic uniformity. This is a book, then, that will appeal to specialists who can profit greatly from mining the wealth of information it contains.

A Question of Culture

As several economies in East Asia catapult into global prominence, European and U.S. perceptions of their cultural legacies have been transformed. Confucianism, once denigrated as the cause for economic stagnation, is now consistently invoked as a key ingredient in the making of the Asian “miracles.” Rather than conceptualizing cultural legacies as evolving, historically contingent, and contested processes, these positive reevaluations of the Confucian tradition—stressing its positive emphasis on hard work, respect for authority, symbiosis between paternalistic concern for subordinates and loyalty toward the corporation, and a consensus between political and business elites and workers to subordinate their sectarian concerns to the larger national interests—reify, essentialize, and exoticize the inhabitants of East Asia.

This pervasive “othering” of the peoples of the Pacific Rim is incisively dissected by several contributors to What Is in a Rim? Edward Fowler demonstrates that the myth of ethnic homogeneity in Japan, by its selective emphasis of certain traits...
and its marginalization, silencing, and excision of others serves the interests of Japanese elites and xenophobic Japan-bashers in the United States. On the one hand, the creation of a "totalizing narrative of an embattled Japanese race" (WR, p. 222) bolsters the political legitimacy of elites and helps to diffuse challenges to their goals by promoting ideological conformity. Additionally, it serves to conceal caste-like stratifications and deepening ethnic fissures within Japan. On the other hand, the facile stereotype of Japanese as a homogenous people enables the construction of a binary series of oppositions between them and the Americans, helpful in casting the Japanese as the main adversary of the West, surreptitiously employing "unfair" trade practices to undermine the economic foundations of "Western, industrialized democracies." If ethnopolitical unity in Japan is a fabrication, it is even more so in many Southeast Asian jurisdictions. Their changing nomenclatures, as Alexander Woodside notes, underscores the novelty of their constitution as jurisdictional entities and obscures the fact that these "states sometimes covered territory and people who had no overwhelming historical reasons for belonging to them" (WR, p. 25).

On a regional level the promotion of an Asian cultural identity by Japanese transnational corporations and politicians like Malaysia's Mahathir Mohamad lends added credence to Woodside's claim that the Asia-Pacific idea serves as a "mobilization myth" to harness "the poor of the region for economic production without representing or encouraging their political and social claims" (WR, p. 24). Similarly, Neferti Tadiar's insightful analysis of the exploitation of Filipina women rips the benign visage shrouding the Pacific Community in official policy documents and exposes the hierarchical relations between peoples of the region. Moreover, when the growth of a variety of subcontracting arrangements has neutralized the power of organized labor and ruptured existing patterns of gender relations, the advocacy of Confucianism and other "traditional Asian" values with their emphasis on patriarchal familial hierarchies rather than on individual rights accords with the interests of the transnational corporations.

In the context of the growing intensification and integration of linkages along the Pacific perimeters of Asia, Donald Nonini's exploration of the construction of labor, gender, and ethnic relations in Malaysia indicates that the very developments in communications and transportation that facilitated the global integration of production also reinforced patterns of patriarchal domination over the young women recruited by offshore plants of transnational corporations. The growing employment of young women also disrupts traditional patterns of work and fosters the migration of young males both to core locations and within the Asia-Pacific region, where they form a low-wage, docile, ethnically and racially stratified, easily disposable labor force. The increasing flows of such migrants to Japan, Fowler notes, vividly illustrates assumptions of racial superiority in that country as the new waves of migrants from Asia and Africa who perform the low-wage tasks that most Japanese consider demeaning or dangerous are termed gaijinkujin, to distinguish them from the gaijin or immigrants from the core.

In a different take on the issue of cultural stereotyping, Arif Dirlik sensitively examines the contributions of Asian-Americans to the westward expansion of the United States—the contributions in particular of the Chinese, the "first" free nonwhite people to migrate in large numbers to the Americas, in agriculture, mining, and above all, in the construction of the Central Pacific railroad, contributions that have been whitewashed by the "metahistorical cultural affinity between the United States and Europe" (WR, p. 316) and in the formation of an Asia-Pacific region. He suggests that recovering an Asian-American identity presupposes a rejection of U.S. history without Asians, as well as of an Asian culture without history... Fixed notions of identity... give way to ethnic cultural identity as a historical process with unpredictable outcomes (WR, pp. 320–21). In a similar vein, Evelyn Hu-Dehart reconstructs the trans-Pacific migrations of the Chinese (and less comprehensively of the Japanese) to Cuba, Peru, Mexico, and other locations in Latin and Central America.

Approaching the question from another angle, Rob Wilson's finely nuanced study of local literature in Hawaii argues that language and culture can be a site of resistance to a global homogenization orchestrated by transnational capital. In opposition to the depiction of Hawaii as an idyllic tropical paradise in tourist posters—a portrayal that glosses over the decimation of resistance to a global homogenization orchestrated by transnational capital. In opposition to the depiction of Hawaii as an idyllic tropical paradise in tourist posters—a portrayal that glosses over the decimation of the indigenous inhabitants—he proposes a strategy of "critical regionalism" to resist "through local styles and tones, the threat of technological modernization and Western 'reason' to folk cultures and indigenous traditions or regional locales" (WR, p. 296). In this perspective, as Dirlik puts it, "local" denotes not "parochial marginality" but the sense of the articulation of a community's culture (WR, p. 324).
Other chapters in this anthology tread over more familiar ground—Bruce Cumings’s chapter on the emergence of a Pacific Rim discourse; Gereffi’s analysis of commodity chains in the garment, automobile, and personal computer sectors; Glenn Alcalay’s study of the response of Pacific Islanders to military activities and nuclear testing by the United States and France; Meredith Woo-Cumings’s argument that East Asian economies have reduced their dependence on U.S. markets; and Tomoji Ishi’s examination of how Japanese corporations have modified their images in the United States. The inclusion of some of these chapters in this anthology remains enigmatic. While the bulk of the chapters sharply interrogate reigning orthodoxies, those by Castillo and Acosta, Chen, and Ishi stand firmly within the mainstream that the others question.

Despite these reservations, by emphasizing patterns of human interaction, migration, and resistance across the Pacific and its related hinterlands—pivotal issues that are all too often consigned to the margins in the literature on the region—What Is a Rim? broadens our understanding in important ways. Precisely because it does not aspire to the kinds of totality sought by authors of the other volumes reviewed here, this multiaspectual, critical examination illustrates the tensions, contradictions, and ambiguities inherent in regional construction.

**What Is to Be Done?**

Accented differently as the three books reviewed here are, they all suggest, implicitly or explicitly, that the Pacific Rim as an analytical unit is anything but self-evident. As indicated by the retrospective reconstruction of regional economic history in Coming Full Circle, its apparent catholicity masks a series of exclusions, marginalizations, silences: that the people who inhabit the lands fronting the Pacific are not equal participants in the activities that structure the region and in the discourse surrounding it. Likewise, the mapping of the garment industry in Global Production demonstrates that the densely interwoven webs of this sector are truly global in scope. Finally, by interrogating cultural stereotypes and recovering the hidden history of Asian-Americans in the westward expansion of the United States and their continuing links to their places of origin, chapters in What Is a Rim? illustrate a whole range of contradictions and tensions in region formation.

These observations suggest several questions for future research. First, the globalization of the networks of production, trade, investment, and labor exchange indicate that the divisioning of the world into the various geocultural areas enshrined in area studies programs are increasingly inadequate to comprehend ongoing processes of capitalist restructuring. As the geopolitical ecology of the world is being reinscribed at the end of the Cold War, and commodity chains orchestrated by transnational corporations encircle the globe, we need to devise new conceptual tools to investigate these worldwide processes of transformation. Additionally, the continued segregation of area studies programs within self-referential compartments means that discussions of race relations in the United States continue to be framed in terms of a binary Black/White opposition, the inadequacies of which were made painfully evident during the 1992 Los Angeles riots.

**While the growth of a variety of subcontracting arrangements has neutralized the power of organized labor and ruptured existing patterns of gender relations, the advocacy of Confucianism and other “traditional Asian” values rather than individual rights accords with the interests of the transnational corporations.**

---


Short Review


by Prasenjit Duara*

In many ways this volume has the appearance of being the standard work, if not quite the classic, of that much attacked, ill-defined, but still burgeoning body of ideas known as “postcolonialism.” As a sympathetic critic, it gives me an opportunity to explore the promise and the dangers in that writing and methodology. Postcolonialism as an intellectual project, rather than a chronological moment, turns the insights (and baggage) of critical cultural studies—from the writings of such stalwarts as Derrida, Foucault, and Lacan—to the relationship between colonies and their colonizers. In the process, it adds a significantly novel dimension to cultural studies because it insists that identities in the metropole (mother country) are just as much constituted by the experience in the colonies; the construction of the colonial Other involves the cultural production of the colonizing self both at home and in the colonies.

In his introduction Gyan Prakash outlines the programatic task in the aftermath of colonialism as “how the history of colonialism and colonialism’s disciplining of history can be shaken loose from the domination of categories and ideas it produced—colonizer and colonized; white, black, and brown; civilized and uncivilized; modern and archaic, cultural identity; tribe and nation.” The book promises to recognize “another history of agency and knowledge alive in the dead weight of the colonial past” by tracking not only colonialism’s history of domination and resistance, but those (subaltern) positions and knowledges that were normalized by colonial categories. Its principal methodology is to study the ways in which self-constituting and self-serving colonial narratives and truths were estranged and reintepreted in the colonial setting. Thus, for instance, the entanglement of the rhetoric of the Rights of Man with the practice of slavery reveals the limits of ideology invisible in France, whereas Gandhi’s reworking of colonial categories—his reading of the premodern in the narrative of Enlightenment history as the nonmodern—was able to subvert colonial systems of knowledge. The essays in the book strive with different degrees of success to ferret out the heterogenous and hybrid knowledges that both colonialism and modern nationalism have sought to appropriate or marginalize. They seek to do so without reintegrating these ambivalent, fragmentary, and fleeting subjectivities into an alternative narrative or synthesis. Herein lies both the strength and weakness of this approach.

The hands of Edward Said and Homi Bhabha, themselves working off the ideas of Fanon and Memme, are everywhere evident in this understanding, and, symbolically, their essays—both previously published—respectively open and close the volume. Said’s essay is overtly political in tone and calls on the field of comparative literature, chock-full of deconstructionists and Marxists, to attend to the hidden geographical element in Western literature whereby the metropolis “gets its authority to a considerable extent from the devaluation as well as the exploitation of the outlying colonial possessions.” Said takes contemporary literary critics to task for conducting their practice within the horizons of text and culture and thus separating culture from politics and history. He challenges us to read Western authors “contrapuntally”; with a simultaneous awareness both of the metropolitan history they narrate and of those other histories overseas that are so crucial to the production of the former. Although Said’s essay sounds a significant theme for the book, it is principally invocatory. It gives us few clues to guide us through the rocky passages across nations and cultures; about the most help we get from it is a slender comment on the poise and beauty of Jane Austen’s *Mansfield Park* deriving centrally from fleeting references to a slave plantation in Antigua.

---

*Prasenjit Duara teaches history at the University of Chicago in Chicago, Illinois, USA. His newest book, *Rescuing History from the Nation: Questioning Narratives of the Nation*, explores the genitive and persistent association between professional history and the nation-state by considering the histories of China and India.

---

Homi Bhabha’s closing essay is characteristically difficult to read but ultimately successful in presenting the humble *chapati* (north Indian flatbread) as the repository and carrier of his notion of a “hybrid space of cultural difference in the negotiation of colonial power-relations.” During the Indian mutiny of 1857, *chapatis* were circulated across the heartland of the mutiny, carrying written and unwritten messages that Ranajit Guha has studied as an instance of rebel agency. Bhabha opens it up still further as the space that was repeatedly and multiply encoded by the insurgents as well as the British who were themselves in the midst of a controlled panic. The hybridity of the *chapati* is particularly apparent as he shows how the native meaning of the Indian symbol is displaced, is
turned inside out and acquires new meaning in opposition to the Enfield rifle, English biscuits, and the like. It is through such circulations of meaning that the hybrid subject—the soldier as/and civil insurgent—gains historical agency. This is a recurrent theme in the essays. For example, Irene Silverblatt’s arduously researched essay on becoming an Indian in seventeenth-century Peru shows how Spanish categories were appropriated by the “Indians” (itself a significant appropriation), but were simultaneously used as cultural weapons in their resistances to the Spanish conquerors.

Heterogeneity, hybridity, the mutual calling to account of colonizer and colonized, metropolis and colony, are the common themes here. There is neither celebration of the civilizing mission nor glorification of national resistance. It is more about everyday complicity and resistance, small acts of subaltern or colonial agency that shatter the comforting pieties of large narratives of civilization and resistance. The volume itself stays clear of an explicit statement of what kind of politics these acts of agency entail. That subject has been discussed elsewhere in the writings of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, James Scott, Gayatri Spivak, Homi Bhabha, and Edward Said, among others. Certainly the volume should put to rest a criticism first voiced by Ajiaz Ahmed of postcolonialism being the product of Third World (especially South Asian) intellectuals in search of an intellectual niche for their career goals in the West. While many Third World intellectuals have indeed espoused postcolonial ideas (sometimes at the cost of careers built on more orthodox foundations), the collection shows that such ideas have a significance and an advocacy quite apart from and far beyond the concerns of such intellectuals.

These essays reveal stylistic differences among the authors that suggest a kind of epistemological politics at stake here. To some extent these stylistic differences reflect disciplinary orientations. I am struck by how scholars have adapted the concepts of cultural studies in ways that have been conditioned by their disciplines. The volume has contributions from historians, anthropologists, and literary critics. Historians remain among the ones who most desire coherence. Zachary Lockman deconstructs the historical narratives of Labor Zionism by attending to the silences about, suppressions of, and transfigurations of Palestinians. It is, however, done in magisterial historical style with meticulous attention to archival materials and with a developmental logic that gives us a clear conclusion. Steven Feierman’s “Africa in History”—to my mind one of the finest pieces in the volume—explores, with consummate skill, the variety of narrative forms, including historical African ones as well as contemporary scholarly ones, through which an event could be understood. He thus confronts the indeterminacy and hybridity of the historical event, but in a way in which the openness seems finite. The next stage can then be presented, not with a closure, but with coherent leads that offer avenues for exploration.

Others feel much more comfortable with and even energized by open-endedness. This is not to suggest some kind of historical superficiality, however, since their historical research can be very exacting. The most vibrant in this genre is the piece by Joan Dayan, which is as subversively carnivalesque as its subject, the Haitian revolution of 1791. The revolutionary process derives its meaning as much from internal class and racial struggles and indigenous practices such as voodoo as it does from the French revolution; and she shows in a rare moment of biting clarity how the meanings of the French history of the Haitian revolution itself derive from French understandings of nineteenth-century Haitian developments. Dayan’s antinarrative deliberately scrambles chronology as it seeks to juxtapose different slices of the Haitian revolution spread over a century or more. The essay celebrates the incapacity of any narrative to master these developments, although, ironically, the research itself is deeply steeped in the historical archive.

Also provocative is Emily Apter’s curious tale of the Algerian woman writer, Elissa Rhais, who wrote Orientalist novels for French readers in the first half of the century. As Apter unfolds her life story in the mode of a detective literary historian, all the threads of the narrative begin to unravel. The gender, the life details, and the very literacy of this minor literary celebrity honored by the French state comes into question. Moving deftly between the novels and the biographical mystery, Apter uses the gender and cultural masquerade of the latter (the novels might as well have been written by a Frenchman) to comment on the fragile foundations of the Orientalism in which French feminists of the time sought comfort. And yet perhaps I have put too decisive a conclusion to her essay. Riveting as the story is, we are continually drawn to other themes more or less associated with the novelist and the stories.

Of course there are several other excellent pieces that are stylistically less flamboyant even while the approach is not strictly historical. The fine piece by Gauri Vishwanathan on the fate of young, believing converts to Christianity in British India is as marvelous a work of historical research as it is a philosophical exercise in demonstrating the inability of liberal discourse to sustain its universalist claims in the colonial context. The essay by Ruth Philips on the history of the representation of Native Americans in U.S. museums strikes an important contemporary issue regarding cultural decolonization. By arguing that the museum represented the Indian only as the pure primitive, it collaborated or secured important national historical myths that sought to deny the contemporary cultural productions of Indians participating in modern economic systems and destined for white consumers. She concludes that the contemporary movement among native Indian museum professionals to display the living culture of Indians rather than old, “authentic” artifacts is a significant move toward decolonization.

But the epistemological issue that the volume raises has to do with whether historical coherence, which has been implicit in both historical and most nonhistorical writing heretofore, always implies a certain linearity and reductionism that negates and falsifies other experiences. In this view the ultimate form of decolonization, as Dayan and some of the others might contend, must strive to reproduce the irreducibility of historical experience. This calls for experimental or “paratactical” writing that stresses associations and contradictions between events. Exciting as some of the writings in After Colonialism may be in many ways, I am yet to be convinced that they are politically enabling in any sense of the word “political” as we know it. Ours is a coherence-making enterprise, and while deconstruction has enabled us to see the politics behind this enterprise, it has also taught us that we cannot but be part of that which we critique. Feierman’s essay is particularly appealing because there is hope in the very clarity with which he presents the predicament of the historian faced with indeterminacy.
We strongly prefer review essays comparing two or more books and discussing problems of approach or analysis, although we also publish shorter reviews of individual works of particular significance. The following review copies have arrived at our office since the last issue, and recent issues have lists of materials we may still have for review that are not listed here. We also welcome reviews of important works on Asia that are not on our lists, including documentary and feature films, TV series, and museum presentations, and we can usually get other books or films for you if you request them. If you are interested in doing a review essay, write to Tom Fenton at BCAS, 464 19th St., Oakland, CA 94612-2297, U.S.A., or by e-mail at <tfenton@igc.org>. For reviews of individual books or other material, please contact Peter Zarrow at the School of Social Science, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, NJ 08540, U.S.A., or by e-mail at <zarrow@math.ias.edu>. For more details, please consult our "Guidelines for BCAS Authors," which are available from Tom Fenton, Peter Zarrow, or at the BCAS web site at <http://csf.colorado.edu/bcas/bcas.html>.

Northeast Asia


South Asia


Southeast Asia

Cornelia Ann Kammerer and Nicola Tannenbaum, eds., Merit and Blessing in Mainland Southeast Asia in Comparative Perspective (New Haven, CT: Yale University Council on Southeast Asia Studies, 1996).

General


East Asia

Jacques Hersh and Johannes D. Schmidt, eds., The Aftermath of “Real Existing Socialism” in Eastern Europe: Volume 1, Between Western Europe and East Asia (New York, NY: St. Martin’s Press, 1997).

BCAS BOOKS

The Other Japan since 1945: Conflict, Compromise, and Resistance
edited by Joe Moore in collaboration with BCAS, fall 1996. Illustrated with drawings and photographs; paper, $24.95; cloth, $72.95. This is a substantially rewritten and expanded version of The Other Japan: Postwar Realities edited by E. Patricia Tsurumi for BCAS from articles published in that journal.

Contemporary Chinese Literature: An Anthology of Post-Mao Fiction and Poetry
edited by Michael S. Duke for BCAS, 1985. 137 pp., illustrated with photographs by Saundra Sturdevant; paper, $28.95. This is an anthology introducing readers to contemporary Chinese literature through translations of important examples in poetry and prose of the genre called critical realism.

Both books are published by M. E. Sharpe, Inc., 80 Business Park Dr., Armonk, NY 10504, U.S.A.; tel. (toll-free) 800-541-6563. For book post, add $3.50 for the first book ($5.00 if by UPS) and $1.50 ($1.00 if by UPS) for each additional book.

© BCAS. All rights reserved. For non-commercial use only. www.bcasnet.org
CCAS Statement of Purpose

The Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars (BCAS) continues to be inspired by the original 1969 statement of purpose of its parent organization, the Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars (CCAS). The BCAS board thus decided in March 1993 that even though CCAS has not existed since 1979, the Bulletin should include the CCAS statement of purpose at least once a year.

We first came together in opposition to the brutal aggression of the United States in Vietnam and to the complicity or silence of our profession with regard to that policy. Those in the field of Asian studies bear responsibility for the consequences of their research and the political posture of their profession. We are concerned about the present unwillingness of specialists to speak out against the implications of an Asian policy committed to ensuring American domination of much of Asia. We reject the legitimacy of this aim, and attempt to change this policy. We recognize that the present structure of the profession has often perverted scholarship and alienated many people in the field.

The Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars seeks to develop a humane and knowledgeable understanding of Asian societies and their efforts to maintain cultural integrity and to confront such problems as poverty, oppression, and imperialism. We realize that to be students of other peoples, we must first understand our relations to them.

CCAS wishes to create alternatives to the prevailing trends in scholarship on Asia, which too often spring from a parochial cultural perspective and serve selfish interests and expansionism. Our organization is designed to function as a catalyst, a communications network for both Asian and Western scholars, a provider of central resources for local chapters, and a community for the development of anti-imperialist research.

Passed 28–30 March 1969, Boston

BCAS Back Issues
All issues—in print and out-of-print—from volume 1, number 1, in 1968 until the present are now available from BCAS or from University Microfilms International. Please consult our guide-index, which covers all previous years and has information about ordering and prices. It is available on our Web site (see address on p. 2 above) or by mail.

The photo on the back cover shows Doug Allen, a Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars faculty member at Southern Illinois University (SIU), speaking at a May 1972 demonstration at SIU against its government funded and controlled Vietnam Center. Today, as in the past, most university administrators are reluctant to give up government grant money and other government funding, and thus "the struggle against the CIA and university militarism in general will have to be carried out by the students, the faculty, and community members who are not entrenched in Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) [and other governmental] business and who care about truth and acting on it." For analysis and study of this and related issues, see the symposium featured in this issue of the Bulletin, "Asia, Asian Studies, and the National Security State." For more information about Doug Allen and the activism at SIU, see p. 31 of the symposium. The photo is by Jay Needleman, and the quote is from Ami Chen Miles, "Cover Cookies in the Academic Cookie Jar," CoverAction Information Bulletin (Washington, D.C.), no. 35 (fall 1991), pp. 17–21.
ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED