4. More egalitarian family relationships. Couples with college education tend to be more egalitarian in their decision-making. Women's movements and feminist advocates are shown as influencing the heightened awareness of the need for gender equality in Filipino families.

Other issues addressed by Abangan related to Filipino families are sexual harassment in the workplace, nepotism, domestic violence, kinship and “kumpadre/kumadre” system, and gender issues.

Emerging images of Filipino families as portrayed in Abangan point out some new elements, variations, and innovations that have been infused into the traditional mold in order to respond to current realities that affect this Filipino institution. The challenges brought about by globalization, the collapse of some Asian economies, and domestic problems are going to shake the very foundations of the close family ties which Filipino families have zealously preserved for centuries. Abangan, with its flair for Filipino humor, has captured the creative and daring ways that many Filipino families have adapted to cope with the contemporary situation.

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CRISIS AND OPPORTUNITY FOR ASIAN STUDIES
THE SOCIAL SCIENCES IN THE STUDY OF ASIA
1998 ASIANetwork CONFERENCE PANEL

Linda Lucas, Economics, Eckerd College
Shiping Hua, Political Science, Eckerd College

Linda Lucas teaches marine resource policy, industrial organization, and economic development. She is co-editor of the newsletter of the International Association for Feminist Economics, an organization of 700 members in over twenty countries. She has taught in Bangkok and has published papers on ASEAN-funded projects on competitiveness in ASEAN countries.

Shiping Hua teaches "Chinese Politics," "Japanese Politics," "Chinese Society through Films," "East Asian Politics," and "Japan, China and the United States." He published *Scientism and Humanism: Two Cultures in Post-Mao China* (SUNY Press, 1995). His current research is on Chinese political culture. Although Professor Hua was unable to attend the 1998 ASIANetwork Conference, he and Professor Lucas collaborated on her presentation based on the following essay.

James Winship, Augustana College, and Yoko Ueda, Spellman College were also panelists.

A group of educators gathered in Hawai‘i in 1995 to assess the future of higher education in the United States (see Christopher Anderson, "UH Community College Faculty Discuss the Next 20 Years," *Ku Lama*, March 10, 1995). Anticipating changes ahead, the faculty concluded that technology will play an ever bigger role; international studies will receive more attention; and interdisciplinary approaches will be adopted more readily than ever. The Chinese like to describe change as a crisis as well as an opportunity. How will these changes affect Asian studies? Do they constitute a crisis or an opportunity?

High technology poses similar challenges to Asian studies as it does to any other discipline, and more emphasis on international studies will further promote Asian studies. Each of these illustrate more opportunities than crises. How about the adoption of interdisciplinary approaches?

Unlike the situation four decades ago when disciplinary boundaries and grand theories within each discipline were unchallenged, today everything is in flux. With our understanding of science becoming more sophisticated, old philosophical assumptions in social science have been undermined. Thus disciplinary boundaries are questioned, and, with the exception of economics, few commonly accepted disciplinary grand theories exist. Even within economics, the mainstream has been challenged, in the past, by Marxism, and in the present, by feminist economic theories.

Social science theory

Asia is an ideal laboratory in which to test social science theories. For religion in anthropology, Asia's
population encompasses four major religions. The Philippines and South Korea have Christian populations of 90% and 25%, respectively; Indonesia is the most populous Muslim country in the world; Confucianism is found in China, Korea, Japan, Taiwan and Vietnam; Hinduism is centered in India. For development in economics, Japan and the Four Little Dragons, South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore and Hong Kong, provide good models. For democratization in politics, India has been the largest stable non-Western democracy in the world. Japan is a model as a non-Western country whose democracy was largely imposed on it by the West. For demography in sociology, China is the largest, while India is not only the second largest, but one of the most diversified in population.

The marriage between Western social science theories and Asia has produced mixed results. On the one hand, Western social science is respected among the students of Asia, and the majority of American graduate students interested in Asia are found in the social science and humanities disciplines rather than in area studies programs.

On the other hand, the adoption of Western social science theories in Asian studies has produced unclear results. For instance, the example of India rejects Samuel P. Huntington's development theory in the sense that democracy does not go hand in hand with good economic development. The status of women in Japan has not been raised in accordance with modernization, as modernization theory promises. The economic success of the so-called Four Little Dragons contradicts dependency theory, which alleges that, because of capitalist exploitation, underdeveloped countries have little hope of catching up with the leading industrialized countries. Describing the experiences of China, Taiwan, Korea and Japan, Thomas Gold, a sociologist who specializes in China, suggests that there is no "generalized model of development."

Bruce Koppel noted in his monograph, "Refugees or Settlers? Area Studies, Development Studies, and the Future of Asian Studies" (East-West Center, Occasional Papers, Education and Training Series, No. 1, April 1995) that the growth of interdisciplinary fields such as Asian studies must be seen as a reaction to long-standing perceptions of limits within the normal discourse of specialized disciplinarian life—especially requirements to emphasize the boundaries of conventional disciplinary debate over the interrelations of culture, history, economy, and politics. We can conclude then that the more ready adoption of interdisciplinary approaches in higher education as predicted by those educators in Hawaii is indeed more of an opportunity than crisis.

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**POSITIONS OPEN**

**Huron College**

The Department of Philosophy at Huron College, an affiliate university college of The University of Western Ontario, invites applications for a three-year limited term at the rank of Assistant Professor, to commence July 1, 1999. After three years, the continuance of the position on a permanent basis (tenure-stream) will be considered.

Candidates should have expertise in both Moral Philosophy and Asian Philosophy, and be able to teach Introductory Philosophy effectively. Applicants should have a completed Ph.D., teaching experience, and publications in the required field. A curriculum vitae, teaching evaluations, academic transcripts, three confidential letters of reference, and a letter of application should be submitted.

Huron College is committed to the highest standards of fairness in its hiring policies and practices.

**Contact:** David Conter, Chair, Philosophy, Huron College, 1349 Western Rd., London, Ontario, N6G 1H3

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**Contact:** Martha Butt, Assistant to the President for External Relations, Payap University, Chiang Mai 50000; Tel.: 66 53 245 353; <martha@payap.ac.th>