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ASIANetwork is a consortium of over one hundred North American colleges which strives to strengthen the role of Asian Studies within the framework of liberal arts education to help prepare a new generation of undergraduates for a world in which Asian societies will play more and more prominent roles. The unique teaching mission of the undergraduate liberal arts institution poses special opportunities and challenges in the development of Asian Studies. ASIANetwork seeks to encourage the study of Asian countries and cultures on our campuses and to enable our students and faculty to experience these cultures first hand. In a time of fiscal constraints, ASIANetwork facilitates conversation among faculty and administrators concerning the development and strengthening of Asian studies programs, as well as ways to foster collaboration among institutions.

The ASIANetwork Exchange, A Newsletter for Teaching About Asia, is published three times a year. The newsletter, an important venue for communication among members, prints, for example, the speeches of ASIANetwork Conference keynote speakers, course syllabi, and reflections by faculty and by students of study-abroad programs.

We welcome submissions of materials which support the above goals. Deadlines for submission of materials are August 1 for the Fall issue, November 1 for the Winter issue, and February 1 for the Spring issue. The editors reserve the right to edit all materials submitted for publication.

Materials may be submitted electronically to ANExchange@augustana.edu, or disks may be sent to Anne Prescott, ASIANetwork Exchange, Augustana College, 639 38th Street, Rock Island, Illinois 61201. For further information contact the editors at the above e-mail address or by telephone at (309) 794-7656 (Anne Prescott) or (309) 794-7269 (Ben Nefzger).

Anne Prescott, Editor; Ben Nefzger and Marsha Smith, Assistant Editors
The year 2000 marks my sixth year of service as a member of the ASIANetwork Board of Directors. I still take great delight in board service, and as I talk with other board members, past and current, I find they feel the same way. There is magic in what happens at our board meetings, in the way we reach consensus on important policy matters, and in the commitments board members make to strengthen ASIANetwork. In the brief time I have in this issue’s column, I wish to discuss the ASIANetwork Board and how it serves the consortium.

The first Board of Directors of ASIANetwork was approved by consortium members at the business meeting held in conjunction with the second meeting of ASIANetwork held at Hickory Ridge Conference Center in April 1993. Since then, thirty-two colleagues, representing twenty-nine different colleges, have served on the Board. Nominations made by current board members of three candidates for three-year Board terms are announced every year in the winter issue of the newsletter. At the business meeting held in conjunction with our annual spring conference, additional nominations are invited from current ASIANetwork members, and Board members are then elected. Caution is always taken to assure that there is balanced representation on the Board.

Steadied by administrative support provided first by Tom Benson, then Dean at St. Andrews College in North Carolina, next Marianna McJimsey at The Colorado College, and finally myself at Augustana College in Illinois, the board meets twice a year, in early October at Hickory Ridge Conference Center and in April in conjunction with our annual spring conference. Having never been a member of another board, I am not certain what happens at other board meetings. Nonetheless, I believe what occurs on this board is quite unique, and that it suggests much about the spirit of our consortium.

ASIANetwork Board members bring a remarkable amount of energy to board meetings, which transfers to a willingness to embrace almost any task. Perhaps a couple of examples of Board commitment and cooperation will clarify this. In 1995, institutional membership in ASIANetwork reached eighty-two colleges and affiliate organizations, only half what it is now. This was my first year of Board service, and one of the first items addressed by the board at our fall meetings was membership. Rita Kipp of Kenyon College was the energetic chair of the membership committee. She emphasized the importance of increasing membership in the consortium, in part to strengthen our financial base (we have always been highly dependent on institutional dues to meet administrative costs). She then proceeded to distribute lists of college deans in various regions of the country and challenged each Board member to contact them by phone to promote ASIANetwork. Instantly, I became a telemarketer, and though I had grown up in the Intermountain West, attended graduate school in New England, and taught in California and the Midwest, my beat was the mid-Atlantic region. What fun! I chatted with a lot of secretaries and assistants to deans and a few—only a few—deans, but from those many calls, about a half dozen new memberships trickled in.

In 1997, when I was Board Chair, ASIANetwork launched its first fall mailing to college presidents in hopes of generating further interest in ASIANetwork. This might seem a simple task, but because the consortium is sustained by volunteer labor (we have no full-time staff) and the mailing had to be prepared in mid-August, when many of us are involved in research and travel, for an early September posting, this proved to be a monumental challenge. A simple listing of what was included in the mailing and from whence it was provided will suggest the cooperative spirit and the energy of ASIANetwork.

First, a list of the names of about 300 college presidents and their addresses was compiled by Tom Coburn of St. Lawrence University and sent on disc to Jane Tiedge, the history department secretary at Augustana, whom I had co-opted into this process. Next, I wrote copy for a cover letter, several hundred were printed on ASIANetwork letterhead, and then individually signed by me. Third, a brochure prepared by Cathy Benton of Lake Forest College with the help of Marianna McJimsey of The Colorado College was printed at Lake Forest College and sent to Augustana for inclusion in the mailing. Fourth, Madeline Chu of Kalamazoo College and Teddy Amoloza of Illinois Wesleyan University prepared and had printed at Kalamazoo College a flyer for the student-faculty fellows program. With the help of Norm Moline of Augustana College, they also produced a flyer for the College-in-Asia Institute program...
and mailed them for enclosure in the mailing. Fifth, Rita Pullium and Carmen Dagnino of the United Board of Christian Higher Education in Asia headquartered in New York City provided information on their Visiting Scholars Program and their Visiting Professors Program to Jane Tiedge who had flyers about these programs printed at Augustana for inclusion in the mailing. A flyer on the Luce Consultancy Program was crafted by Dottie Borei of Guilford College and sent to Augustana. Believe it or not, all these materials arrived on schedule so that a group of Augustana College students were able to stuff one of each in envelopes which were mailed on schedule to college presidents. Pretty amazing!! This isn’t the way Wall Street does things, but it works for ASIANetwork and, despite the daunting nature of this project, similar mailings have followed in subsequent years.

I hope that at this spring’s conference each of you will find current and past Board members and thank them for their efforts. Equally important, I hope some of you will consider serving or encouraging a friend to serve on the Board. If you or a friend are interested, please contact the Vice-Chair of the Board, Joel Smith at jsmith@skidmore.edu. He will chair the nominations committee for Board membership next fall and will be collecting data on possible Board nominees.

Van Symons
9th Annual ASIANetwork Conference in Cleveland
April 20-22

On April 20-22, 2001, the ASIANetwork Conference will be held at the Hilton Cleveland East/Beachwood Hotel, Cleveland, OH. The ASIANetwork Conference is customarily held in a different part of the country in one year, and at the Hickory Ridge Conference Center near Chicago in alternate years. The choice of venue in Cleveland follows ASIANetwork conferences held (alternatively with the Chicago site) in the Northwest (Tacoma, Washington), Northeast (Manchester Village, Vermont), Southeast (St. Petersburg, Florida), and Southwest (Santa Fe, New Mexico).

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

The keynote speakers have both done significant work in the medium of film. The first is Dr. Joseph Elder, who is Professor of the Departments of Sociology, Languages and Cultures of Asia, and Integrated Liberal Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and who has produced a number of films on religion and society in North India. His address, on Friday April 20, is titled “Teaching India: Is Seeing Believing?” Our second keynote speaker is Mr. Regge Life, an African-American film maker who is the Executive Director and Founder of Global Film Network, Inc., and whose own experience in Japan has been mirrored and explored in three critically acclaimed films (Doubles, Struggle and Success, and After America...After Japan). His address, which will be at John Carroll University on Saturday, April 21, is titled The Underrated Power of Culture.

JOHN CARROLL UNIVERSITY

The evening program on Saturday, April 21 will be graciously hosted by John Carroll University. It will begin with a reception from 6:30-7:00 in the Murphy Room, which will be hosted by the Dean of the College. This will be followed by a banquet in the Student Activities Center Conference Room, from 7:00-8:30, and by Mr. Regge Life’s keynote address, in the Jardine Room, at 8:30. Buses will transport conference attendees to John Carroll University for the evening, and return them to the conference hotel after the program.

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

The two plenary sessions will be “The Fulbright Programs and Asian Studies: Strategies for Success,” which will be chaired by David Adams, Senior Program Officer, Asia/Middle East, Council for International Exchange of Scholars, and “Ethics and Politics in China and the West,” which will be chaired by Prof. Charles Ess, Drury University. To enable greater focus on the “how-to” aspect of the first plenary session, David Adams encourages members to review the websites for CIES (www.cies.org) and Department of Education (www.ed.gov/offices/OPE/HEP/iegps/) before the meeting, to gain greater familiarity with their offerings.

The eight breakout panels in two concurrent blocks on Saturday and Sunday morning fall into three categories. Two of these panels flow from programs funded by the Freeman Foundation, namely the Freeman Faculty-Student Research Program, and the Freeman College-In-Asia Program. Three of these panels are directly focused on teaching, particularly with integrating the arts into the classroom: “Bringing Asian Art into the Classroom: Teaching Methods and Curriculum Development,” “Asian Arts in the Liberal Arts,” and “Asian Cinema in Asian Studies.” Finally, three of these panels are concerned with larger issues affecting Asian Studies, whether conceptual or institutional “Encountering Indian Christianity on its Own Terms,” “The Social and Political Impact of Globalization,” and “Strategies for the Very Small Asian Studies Program.”

An exciting new aspect of this year’s program will come on Saturday afternoon (April 21), when the program venue will shift from the conference hotel to the Cleveland Museum of Art. Our time at the Museum will have three different dimensions: an overview of the Asian collection as a whole, interactive sessions in which participants view selected works from the collection, and finally unstructured time during which participants can enjoy the collection (or other parts of the Museum) as they wish. Buses will transport conference attendees to the Museum from the conference hotel, and back to the hotel from the Museum.

Finally, under the assumption that “good ideas lead to appealing grant proposals,” the ASIANetwork Board of...
Directors and the Development team will be soliciting your good ideas in an informal brainstorming session on Friday April 20, immediately following Dr. Joseph Elder's keynote address.

START AND FINISH OF THE CONFERENCE
Registration begins at 4 p.m. in the lobby of the Cleveland East/Beachwood Hilton. The conference will begin with a banquet at 6:30, followed by the keynote address by Dr. Joseph Elder. It will conclude at 1 p.m. on Sunday, April 22, after the closing lunch.

PRE-CONFERENCE TOUR
As has been the case for the previous two years, the conference will be preceded by a pre-conference trip to Asian-related sites in the Cleveland area, including a Hindu temple, the Vietnamese Buddhist Association, the Asia Plaza, and the Cleveland Chinese Senior Citizens Association. Complete cost for the trip, including lunch, will be $25 per person. An additional and even more unusual opportunity is the chance to attend a performance by the Cleveland Orchestra on Thursday evening, April 19 (the cost for which will depend on the price of the ticket). For more detailed information on this exciting opportunity, please see the article by Dr. Susan Long in this newsletter.

ACCOMMODATIONS
Room rates at the Hilton Cleveland East/Beachwood are $89 per night for a single or double. The rate is not inclusive of local taxes, which are currently 11.75%. Individuals are responsible for making their own reservations by calling 1-877-865-5324, or directly to the hotel at (216) 464-5950. Rooms will be guaranteed either with a first night advance deposit, or an accepted major credit card number.

Reservations should be made no later than Sunday, April 1, 2001. Any rooms remaining in the ASIANetwork block after this date will be released for normal sale. Any reservations requested after this date may not be eligible for the group discount, and are subject to availability. Hotel room reservations must be made by Sunday, April 1, 2001.

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION
Registration must be received by Friday, March 30, 2001. The registration fee for attendees from ASIANetwork member institutions is $150 per person, and $160 for Non-ASIANetwork members. For those registering after this date, there will be a $10 surcharge.

The conference registration fee is inclusive, and must be paid in full. The registration fee includes the following meals: the Friday night banquet on April 20; continental breakfast, lunch and banquet dinner on Saturday, April 21; continental breakfast and lunch on Sunday, April 22, and beverages for mid-morning breaks on both Saturday and Sunday.

Conference Registration fees must be received by Friday, March 30, 2001. Please make checks payable to ASIANetwork, and mail to the Executive Director, Dr. Van Symons, 638 38th St., Rock Island, IL 612-01-2296. For further information, contact either Dr. Symons (hisymons@augustana.edu), tel. 309-794-7413, or Prof. James Lochtefeld (jgl@carthage.edu), ASIANetwork Board Chair, at 262-551-5913.

Pre-Conference Tour
of Asian Sites in Cleveland
Friday, April 20

Cleveland is a characteristically Midwestern city, known for its segregated residential neighborhoods, its Eastern European heritage, and its recent revival of its downtown riverfront and lakefront areas. By 1996, it was home to approximately 25,000 Asians, a small but visible presence in the community. This year’s pre-conference field trip will center around the questions: What institutions have developed in this setting to deal with the variety of contemporary issues facing Asians? How do culturally different groups attempt to balance ethnic identity with the reality of their American daily lives?

Field trip participants will depart from the hotel at 8:45 am by university bus. The tour begins in Parma, an inner-ring suburb stigmatic as a bastion of white, middle class culture. After driving past old storefronts and Christian churches of every imaginable denomination, we will arrive at a contemporary building of red and white stone blocks, set spectacularly overlooking a ravine. The Shiva Vishnu Temple was founded in 1983, the result of the post-1965 immigration of numerous highly educated, English-speaking professionals from India. The current building, dedicated in 1997, serves as a focus for an Indian community otherwise divided by regional and language differences. The temple is the site of worship, religious study, participation in the area food bank, and classical music and dance classes and performances. One of its three priests, Shri Venkatachalapathi Samudrala, was the first clergy person outside of the Judeo-Christian tradition to offer an opening session prayer in the U.S. House of Representatives in Washington on September 14, 2000. The dedication plaque on the dramatic bridge to the temple’s main entrance suggests the institution’s sense of purpose: “The Bridge to our Heritage is the link between our modern western lifestyle and rich religious and cultural roots of a time and place whence we came.”

From the Shiva Vishnu Temple, our bus will travel through Cleveland city neighborhoods where we might find a Korean grocery right next to a gyros restaurant. Passing Cleveland’s landmark Westside Market, a public housing project, and the revitalized Ohio City neighborhood, we will arrive at the Chua Vien Quang, the Vietnamese Buddhist Association of Cleveland. Refugees who arrived in the 1970s, and family members who have subsequently joined them, make up the approximately 3,000-person Vietnamese community in Cleveland. Most of the adults have obtained work in factories, restaurants or hotels, saving to bring family
to the U.S. and to send children to college. The Association was founded in 1981 to meet not only the spiritual but also the practical needs of this growing community. In 1987 Vietnamese Buddhists dedicated a converted storefront, painted yellow and red, to serve as its temple and community center. Regular Sunday services are supplemented by visiting Vietnamese Buddhist teachers from all over the U.S. The temple also serves as a social and educational center which helps newer immigrants to adjust to their lives in the U.S. and older immigrants and their children to maintain a sense of ethnic community.

In contrast to the relatively recent arrival of Vietnamese is the small but dynamic Chinese-American population of Cleveland. On the way to Cleveland's old Chinatown, our bus will pass through downtown Cleveland, providing views of the new Cleveland Browns Stadium, the Great Lakes Science Center, and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, designed by cosmopolitan Chinese-American architect I. M. Pei. At the eastern edge of downtown is Cleveland's original Chinatown. Among a small row of Chinese restaurants is a sign in gold lettering, "On Leong Chinese Merchants Assn" over an arched doorway leading to an upstairs Chinese temple and meeting hall. Sun Yat-Sen is reported to have spoken here on a fund-raising tour just days before the 1911 Chinese Revolution.

Our lunch will be a dim sum feast of dumplings and noodles at the ten-year-old Bo Loong Restaurant several blocks away. Laura Taxel, author of a local restaurant guide, describes "the first impression is of something between a cafeteria and a university dining hall with a funky red-and-gold oriental motif. But the fact that the decor lacks a slick look (part of its unique charm) does not keep this restaurant from being a hands-down favorite among Cleveland's Chinese families, and their regular, visible presence is a measure of the authentic quality of the food."

As in other American cities, Cleveland's contemporary Chinese community is not really a community at all, despite the existence of a local chapter of the umbrella Organization of Chinese Americans. The earliest Cantonese settlers arrived in the late 19th century and their descendants are often successful business and professional people, educated in American universities and living in the suburbs. Post-1965 immigrants from Taiwan have joined them in suburban living and white collar jobs, while others, often from the mainland, have come in recent years as laborers or students and continue to rely on Chinatown ties to help them survive. Held together by neither geographical origins nor current residence, language, culture, or religion, what brings them together, explains the property manager of Asia Plaza development, is food and traditional medicine.

The Asia Plaza mini-mall is the anchor of Cleveland's "new Chinatown," a $2.3 million renovation of an old warehouse which opened in 1990. It contains a large Chinese grocery store, restaurant, insurance agency, travel agency, gift shops, herbal pharmacies, a video shop, and offices. The project received state and city economic development funds and was envisioned as the anchor of major urban redevelopment of the area. This has been slow to happen. But in addition to its economic functions, Asia Plaza incorporates a meal program at the restaurant for elderly Chinese residents of the area and houses a branch clinic of the county hospital.

Going outside of the community for aid in solving Chinese-American problems has a short history in America's Chinatowns, but in Cleveland it has proved an effective way to meet traditional obligations. Just down the street from Asia Plaza, we will visit a new apartment building for Chinatown's senior citizens. The Cleveland Chinese Senior Citizens Association identified the need for low-cost urban housing for the elderly, and worked with a local non-profit developer and a $2.8 million grant from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development on the project. The 43-unit independent living facility, Asian Evergreen Apartments, opened in 1998.

Leaving the "new Chinatown" area, our bus will pass through the Hough area, which in the 1950s and 1960s was home to many of Cleveland's Japanese-American residents. It was also the scene of the violent and destructive urban riots of the late 1960s, leaving the area largely African American and poor. In the past few years, however, Cleveland has encouraged neighborhood re-development and our view will be of deteriorated apartments next to large, beautiful new homes. The children and grandchildren of the Japanese-Americans who lived there are now scattered throughout the suburban areas where they are joined by business people and professionals from Japan who often stay only a few years in Cleveland.

Our final stop, time and weather permitting, will be a brief visit to the Japanese Garden of the Cleveland Botanical Gardens in University Circle, Cleveland's cultural hub. The small garden, designed by Clevelander David Slawson and competed in 1975, will offer a moment of quiet repose before the bus returns us to the hotel at 5:00.

The cost of the field trip, including lunch, is $25. For the additional price of the ticket, arrangements will be made for anyone wishing to attend the Cleveland Orchestra concert on April 19. The orchestra, thought to be among the world's best classical symphony orchestras, will perform Varese's Octandre, Manoury's Sound and Fury, Stravinsky's Symphony in Three Movements, and Berg's Three Pieces for Orchestra, Op. 6, conducted by Pierre Boulez. The cost will be between $20 and $46, depending on the number of people and the location of the seats. For further information about the field trip or the Cleveland Orchestra concert, please contact Susan Long, Professor of Anthropology, John Carroll University, University Hts., OH 44118, Tel. 216-397-1685, or e-mail at long@jcu.edu.
Board Nominees

The following three people have been nominated by the Board of Directors to fill positions on the Board of Directors for the term 2001-2004. Board elections will be held at the ASIANetwork business meeting Saturday morning, April 21.

Stephen Goldberg

Stephen Goldberg is a member of the art department at Hamilton College, where he teaches Introduction to Asian Art as well as histories of Chinese, Japanese and Buddhist art. He is currently collaborating with two other Asian Studies faculty members to develop a course in Asian Civilizations. His area of research is principally Chinese art with a special focus on Chinese calligraphy. He has also been engaged in cross-cultural comparative aesthetics, with an emphasis on Indian, Chinese, Japanese and Western aesthetics. He recently presented a public lecture entitled “The Legacies of Classical Thought in the Art of China and the West: A Study in Cross-Cultural Comparative Aesthetic” at St. John’s College. Each year since the early 1990s he has been involved with the “Infusing Asian Studies into the Curriculum” Summer and Regional Institutes sponsored by the East-West Center’s Asian Studies Development Program and the University of Hawaii.

Stephen has attended several ASIANetwork conferences, most recently representing Hamilton College as the Chair of Asian Studies. This year he will attend as Chair of the Art Department. As a Board member, he hopes to generate discussion on the future of Asian Studies, and to present a proposal for a new Asian Studies Program designed to prepare students for the 21st century.

Gita Rajan

Gita Rajan is an associate professor of English and Director of Asian Studies at Fairfield University. She teaches courses in Writers of the Asian Diaspora, Imperial Fictions and Colonial Voice-Overs, and Introduction to Asian American Literature. She has published in the areas of cultural, postcolonial, and Victorian studies and art criticism. Currently she is working on analyzing South Asian fiction as examples of ethical discourse in global culture. As the newly-appointed Director of Asian Studies, she inaugurated Fairfield’s ties with the Visiting Scholar Program with the UBCHEA. She also formed alliances with other departments and area studies programs to host speakers and arrange cultural events.

Gita is a newcomer to ASIANetwork, but she was fascinated by the range and scope of discussions at last year’s conference, and was energized by the mood of genuine intellectual commitment and solidarity of the participants. As a Board member, she believes that she will make a valid contribution in deepening understanding of various strands of Asian cultures to benefit ASIANetwork colleagues and their students. “I think there is a fundamental reality to the phrase ‘explosion of Asian peoples in global culture,’ thus I feel that our students will be encountering Asia and its people in various ways, and it is our duty as teachers to make this interaction ethical and equitable.”

Paul Watt

Paul Watt is currently a professor and director of Asian Studies, as well as a member of the department of Religious Studies at DePauw University. His specialty is the religious and cultural history of early modern Japan, and he teaches courses on Buddhism, Religion and Society in Modern Japan, Traditional Japanese literature, Modern Japanese Novelists, and Introduction to Contemporary Japanese Culture. Paul has been an active ASIANetwork conference participant since the early days, and he is looking forward to having the opportunity to contribute to the work of ASIANetwork at an important time in the history of Asian Studies at liberal arts colleges. In particular, he looks forward to working with both Board and ASIANetwork member colleagues to consider not only ways in which new ventures in Asian Studies may be supported but also ways in which established programs can be reshaped and rejuvenated to meet changing circumstances.
Keynote Address  
*The Real Tripitaka Revisited: International Religion and National Politics*  
Anthony C. Yu, The University of Chicago

INTRODUCTION: THE STORY OF XUANZANG

In year 627 of the Common Era, a twenty-six-year-old Chinese Buddhist monk put on a wig to hide his clean-shaven head, took off his clerical garb and donned some secular clothing, and, under the cover of nocturnal darkness, slipped out of the heavily-guarded gates of the imperial capital Chang'an (Everlasting Peace). He joined a caravan of merchants leaving central China and headed northwestward on the famous “silk route.” Eventually, he would make it past five more fortified watchtowers, go through the well-known Jade-Gate Pass (Yumen guan) on the Great Wall, and embark on one of the most famous journeys undertaken by a Chinese in all of that civilization’s long history.  

This monk was none other than Chen Xuanzang, who left China because he was troubled even as a teenager both by the lack of certain authentic Buddhist scriptures and by what he considered to be poor translations of crucial texts. Eventually, he made a vow to serve Buddha and China by going to India, the land of his faith, to acquire the needed scripts. Sustaining appalling hardships and dangers along the long trek from central China, through the rugged and desolate plains of northwest China, Tibet, and Central Asia, up the towering peaks of the Himalayas, he finally reached his destination—but only after he had been robbed, beaten several times, and encountered numerous near-death experiences induced by starvation, thirst, exposure, exhaustion, and loneliness.  

After he reached India, he eventually took up residence at the famous Nalanda Monastery and criss-crossed the Indian continent at least five times. Not only did he master the difficult languages of his faith, principally Sanskrit and Pali, so that he could read with expertise the sacred writings, but he became so fluent in other Indian languages as well that he could debate native princes and priests. When he preached and expounded the Law, according to his biographers, even brigands and thieves were so moved that they converted to Buddhism. To this day, shrines and numerous memorabilia of Xuanzang’s visits are preserved in various locales in India.  

Although Xuanzang was not the only cleric, Chinese or foreign, who had made a trip from China to either India or some part of Central Asia to seek Buddhist writings or a deeper understanding of Buddhist doctrines (history tells us that there were over seven hundred of these men spanning nearly six centuries of such activities), his exploits were certainly the most celebrated and the most admired. He departed China a fugitive, for reasons I will make clear in due course, but he returned 16 years later virtually a hero, bringing home with him in the year 645 some 657 volumes (bu) of Buddhist writings. The second emperor of the Tang Dynasty, Taizong, received him in the capital and quickly showered him with generous royal protection and patronage so that he could devote the rest of his life to serving Buddhism by translating the scriptures he brought back. Receiving allegedly a handwritten “Preface to the Holy Teachings (Shengjiao xu)” from the emperor extolling both his virtue...
and Buddhist scriptures, he was then installed in the Great Wild Goose Pagoda, an edifice still standing today and seen probably by many of my audience who have visited the city Xi'an, the modern Chang'an. After his death, the life and deeds of Xuanzang swiftly metamorphosed from history to myth, and his story went through repeated and variegated tellings by mouth, brush, drama, poetry, painting, and iconography for nearly a thousand years. In the late sixteenth century, a one-hundred-chapter novel was published celebrating this beloved tale of scripture-seeking, and overnight, *Xiyouji* or The Journey to the West became the most popular novel of all time. Because my own work has helped to introduce this novel in its complete form to the entire English-reading world, my readers may think that I am going to talk about the story. Instead, however, what I choose to do here is to use the inspired example of the historical monk to make a few observations about the unusual historical setting and background of this pilgrimage, the significance of Xuanzang's activities, and the meaning of his achievement both for him and for us today in the context of national politics and international religion.

**THE EXCHANGE OF CULTURES**

Let me, then, call your attention first to the fact that Xuanzang's accomplishments, no less than countless other stories about the memorable deeds—real or imaginary—of Buddhist priests and laypersons, of individuals and communities, all belong to the history of that religious tradition in China. For nearly two millennia, that entire history itself, sustained by both mercantile and religious traffic, represents the most momentous and consequential meeting of two already highly developed civilizations, each possessive of immense cultural sophistication and achievement. When Buddhism reached China in the second century, that nation already had a literate and bookish culture for over a thousand years, but Indian Buddhism brought with it a language and a new world of writings that, in sheer scope and volume, both elicited tremendous response from the Chinese and produced profound changes in the receiving culture.

Earlier in this century, the famous scholar, philosopher, and diplomat, Hu Shi(h), had opined that Indian literary forms and inventiveness directly and decisively influenced Chinese culture in the development of imaginative fiction, in contrast to ancient Chinese fictive writings that began as anecdotal legends and episodic variations of historiographic prose. Major themes and topics such as the “rabbit in the moon (yuetu),” the use of the watermark on a boat, to weigh an elephant, the belief in the dragon (naga) as the parent of the horse, and certain myths about sweet dew (ganlu) and deathless liquids (bushi shui) that Chinese frequently take for granted as native ideas, are, according to the well-known research by Chinese scholars in China and elsewhere, actually imported materials from India. In that regard, Sanskrit as the most authoritative, classical literary language of India has had such a profound and far-reaching impact on China that its full effect has yet to be adequately studied and understood. In terms of formal features, Sanskrit is probably the most different from Chinese, because the Indian language is characterized by extremely complex grammar and morphology, whereas Chinese, an essentially monosyllabic and non-morphological language, is virtually its diametrical opposite.

When these two mighty linguistic systems collided, astonishing results occurred. Long before China's contacts with the tongues and scripts of Europe and America, the encounter with Indian writing and speech produced an undertaking in translation such that, in sheer volume, scope, and magnitude, the civilized world had never seen hitherto. Apart from the thousands of titles that form the body of Buddhist scriptures, the Chinese canon also contains important volumes on lexicography, the science of translation, grammar, and linguistics that lamentably too few Chinese scholars have studied. It was estimated by Liang Qichao, the reformer and modern scholar, that Indian languages, directly or indirectly, had helped to enlarge Chinese vocabulary by at least 35,000 words, surpassing the thirty-some-odd thousand that Shakespeare bequeathed to the English language. The impact of Sanskrit on Chinese culture, moreover, extends beyond translation and diction, for the recent investigations by Professors Rao Zongyi (Hong Kong), Tsu-lin Mei (Cornell), and Victor Mair (University of Pennsylvania) have demonstrated conclusively that tonal metrics (sheng lü), the exceedingly complicated scheme of prosody built on the juxtaposition of different tones that govern most forms of premodern Chinese poetry such as regulated verse (lūshī), lyric (ci), and song (qu), all derived from the earnest attempt of the Chinese to imitate certain phonetic properties of the Sanskrit language. Those immortal lines of poetry by Li Bo, Du Fu, Bo Juyi, and Su Shi—and one could name any famous or obscure poet between the fifth and twentieth century which the Chinese people cherish and want to teach their schoolage children to recite—could not have been written in the forms that they have now come to love without the direct stimulus of certain foreign linguistic features.

If this brief account seems too monothematic, I should point out that Indian influence on Chinese culture extends far beyond language. Many spices and varieties of food, including such ordinary items as black and white pepper and carrots or more exotic items like ghee-butter, cheeses, and kumiss, were introduced to China from “the West,” meaning in early medieval times the regions of India and Central Asia. Indian culture contributed to Chinese development of many facets of technology, encompassing some techniques of surgery, the medical use of certain analgesic or anesthetic ingredients, and the enlargement of herbal medications. The importation of new forms of dance, music, and instruments, an all-too-familiar topic in Chinese literary history, directly helped develop an entirely new poetic form, the lyric or ci, in the seventh and eighth centuries. Evangelistic efforts of Buddhist communities sped up dramatically in the Tang dynasty the use of paper and printing as well, just as monastic education, according to contemporary scholars, significantly modified even certain aspects of the imperial educational system.
This is the historical context in which we must locate the story of Xuanzang’s journey, for the event did not come about as a freak accident any more than he was living in a socio-cultural vacuum. The historical monk, along with well over one million residents in the capital of Chang’an of his time (with thousands of these being foreigners who came from as far away as Persia and modern Turkey), was already living in an environment that could justly be labeled multicultural or pluralistic. Without the direct impact of a genuinely foreign culture and its undeniable religious appeal, there would have been no such undertaking as going to India to seek more scriptures.

THE CONFLICT OF CULTURES

I have emphasized this element of cultural diversity in the historical and social setting of Xuanzang’s life and time because I think it may offer us some valuable issues to ponder, both about the monk personally and about certain aspects of historical Chinese culture generally. Despite this century’s exponential increase in scholarly knowledge of the varied constituents that have gone into the making of Chinese civilization in any particular period, the conviction that historical Chinese culture is something that has always remained stable, unified, and monolithic persists in large domains of native and non-native Sinology. Because Indian Buddhism has already been part of China’s total culture for so long, it is difficult for Chinese to think of it as a foreign religion. Indeed, even among the Asian students on American campuses today, it would not surprise me to learn that there are quite a few who may be adherents to one of the several schools or divisions of Chinese, Japanese, Korean, or Tibetan Buddhism largely because of familial influence. To acknowledge, however, the age of the Chinese Buddhist tradition or its continuous vitality even among contemporary Chinese believers is not the same as saying that Buddhism, now or historically, is a fully integrated part of Chinese culture, however defined. On the contrary, it is my contention—and that of other scholars as well—that Buddhism, since its first arrival in northeast Asia, has always been in tension, and frequently in conflict, with the dominant, official tradition of China. Despite the many changes or modifications of both doctrine and ritual that various forms of Buddhism had instituted over the centuries to accommodate the reality of Chinese society, Buddhist belief remains at odds with the traditional Chinese understanding of the state and the family, both institutions, as they surely are even to this day, imbued with Confucian notions and values. The evidence of conflict may be detected not merely in, for example, the famous “Memorial Against the Buddha’s Relics (Jian ying fugu biao)” penned by the famous Tang poet and Confucian statesman, Han Yu (768-824), a treatise still frequently studied by Chinese school children, but also more vividly in the widespread turmoil in Taiwan localities during 1996 and 1997, when monasteries and clerics were accused of harming or destroying familial structures and values by seducing young men and women to enter religious orders.

Seventeen thousand residents in the city of Chang’an of his time (with thousands of these being foreigners who came from as far away as Persia and modern Turkey), was already living in an environment that could justly be labeled multicultural or pluralistic. Without the direct impact of a genuinely foreign culture and its undeniable religious appeal, there would have been no such undertaking as going to India to seek more scriptures.

The conflict between Buddhism and Chinese culture is in essence to deny the self-sufficiency or adequacy of indigenous wisdom and thought, and to identify one’s deepest norms and values with something regarded as non-Chinese. To affirm that the Buddhist sangha should supercede the obligations of one’s family, as the young teenager Xuanzang also maintained when he sought ordination at the Luoyang monastery (FSZ 5.2-3), is to tear apart the ties of kinship that Chinese have valued since time immemorial. Finally, to insist that such objects of one’s religious veneration (e.g., Buddhist scriptures and teachings) as something to be acquired despite express legal and political prohibition is to incur the risk of treason.

In the light of Buddhism’s inherent conflict with Chinese culture, Xuanzang’s religious devotion and commitment—and not merely scholarly zeal, as Chinese savants past and present would like to describe his motivation—cannot be doubted. What is remarkable is how such commitment apparently has the tacit approbation and support of his family. In this matter, both the utterance and silence of textual sources may speak volumes.

It should be apparent to anyone familiar with the priest’s biographical writings that he came from a rather unusual family. According to the FSZ 1, his grandfather Chen Kang, by excellence in scholarship, was appointed Erudite in the School for the Sons of the State (guozi boshi), a moderately high rank. His father Chen Hui was said to have mastered the classics at an early age and loved to be recognized as a Confucian scholar (hao ru zhe zhi rong). As the Sui declined, the father buried himself in books, refusing all offers of official appointments and duties. Despite this withdrawal from public service, the paternal devotion to familial instruction in the Confucian manner never let up, and the FSZ singled out one incident to praise the sensitive piety of the young Xuanzang. While reciting the paradigmatic Classic on Filial Piety before his father, the eight-year old suddenly rose to his feet to tidy his clothes. When asked for the reason for his abrupt action, the boy replied: “Master Zeng [Confucius’s disciple] heard the voice of his teacher and arose from his mat. How could Xuanzang sit still when he hears his father’s teachings?”

This anecdotal exemplum, intended unmistakably to magnify the elite orthodoxy of both father and son, may serve at the same time as an unintended and ironic commentary of familial ethos. Given the Confucian heritage identi-
fied with ancestor, great-grandfather, grandfather, and father
duly rehearsed in the biography, one would have thought
that the text would proceed to provide more encomium on
the acumen and achievement of the subject at hand.
Xuanzang, let us notice, was indeed said to have also mastered
the Confucian classics at an early age, but the account
of his prodigious intelligence and love of learning becomes
a mere pretext to display his astounding decision to seek
"holy orders," as it were, at age thirteen. What is even more
astonishing is the fact that he had an elder brother who by
this time was already an ordained Buddhist priest. Of the
four sons belonging to the Chen household, therefore, at least
two apparently had entered the sangha while they were very
young.

To this unusual phenomenon, the biographical text
by its amazing silence implied no familial opposition. Given
the strict vow of celibacy that Chinese Buddhism had al­
days demanded of its clergy, this silence meant that the fam­
ily no less than the young men themselves was willing to
incur the risk of not providing a male heir for familial lin­
eage, a failure that, according to the words of Mencius, was
the greatest form of unfiliality. Xuanzang’s family, in other
words, could be one of those which, while fully participa­
tory (as far as we could learn from history) in all aspects of
Chinese life of their time, was also subscribing to a form of
cultural diversity. They were unafraid to embrace a system
of values that, in many respects, was critical of, or at odds
with, their native tradition. Once the young Xuanzang had
entered the Gate of Emptiness in formal commitment, we
learn from the biography that he and his brother traveled
widely not merely between the two Tang capitals of Chang’ an
and Luoyang, but also to far away Sichuan in quest of fur­
ther learning and teachings from erudite priests. Apparently,
these activities during the dangerous and tumultuous period
of transition between the Sui and the Tang were tacitly sup­
ported by the family.

Although history tells of the considerable popular­
ity of Buddhism in the Sui and early Tang, this religion’s
widespread influence was not met with universal acceptance,
as we have just noted. Even in the person of Taizong, whose
own career eventually entailed such intimate involvement
with this particular monk no less than with the larger mo­
nastic and lay communities, the emperor’s attitude towards
Buddhism was marked more by manipulations of opportu­
nistic politics than by the urgent promptings of faith.10 This
contrast of attitude and behavior towards religion on the part
of emperor and subject may betoken not merely the idiosyn­
cratic difference of two individuals but also the wider phe­
nomenon of reception or resistance. In the accounts of
Xuanzang’s early life and already assertive engagement with
Buddhist studies and preaching in fraternal company, could
we not detect perhaps the family’s basic and genial regard
for this religion? Might not such familial hospitality, in turn,
deepen his commitment to the extent of undertaking not
merely the daunting pilgrimage of sixteen years but also the
task of a reversed missionary throughout the land of his faith
when he participated liberally in doctrinal disputations and
evangelistic preaching? Finally, and most significantly, could
such familial support furnish him with the needed courage
and confidence to embark on his journey against imperial
prohibition, thus transforming a religious pilgrimage into also
an act of religious defiance against the Chinese state?

THE PASSIONATE PILGRIM

Let me hasten to add that such questions on possible
influence of familial setting are acknowledgeably rhetorical
and speculative. What we know with certainty, however, was
the fact that Xuanzang departed Tang territory furtively, for
"at this time," declares the FSZ (1. 7), “the state’s gover­
nance was new and its frontiers did not reach far. The people
were prohibited from going to foreign domains.” The trans­
gressive act of the monk thus earned him a contemporary
biographer’s justifiable observation that he left Tang China
“with a warrant on his head,”11 but Sally Wriggins’s remark
only inferred the severity of his crime. The textualized ac­
counts of his early biographers revealed more intensely his
religious convictions.

The initial petition for permission to go West for
scriptures and doctrinal clarification, according to FSZ 1.6,
was submitted by Xuanzang and other Buddhist clerics.
“When the imperial rescript denied it, all the others retreated,
but the Master of the Law refused to bend (bu qu). Because
he then resolved to travel alone and the road to the West was
both difficult and dangerous, he had to interrogate his mind­
and-heart on the matter. Since he had been able to bear and
overcome so many afflictions of humankind already, he could
not retreat from his present duty. Only then did he enter a
stupa to make known his firm resolve, begging in prayer for
the various Saints’ secret benediction so that his journey and
return might be unimpeded.”

This depiction of the priest’s resolve not only nar­
rates the deliberateness of his motivation but also the stead­
fastness in his resolve. The biographies tell us that during
the process of leaving Chinese territory, Xuanzang was
warned twice about his incriminating action. The FSZ (1.6­
7) had only the briefest mention of one Li Daliang, Regional
Military Commander (dudu)12 of Liangzhou, who, upon
learning of the priest’s desired project, simply urged him to
turn back. In the Obituary of Xuanzang composed by the
disciple Mingxiang most likely in 664 and thus the earliest
biography of the priest, a slightly longer anecdote detailed
the incident of a nameless barbarian hired to sneak the pil­
gram past the five signal-fire ramparts strung out beyond the
Jade-Gate Pass.

In the middle of the night [while they
were sleeping by a riverbank], the bar­
barian arose and walked toward the
Master of the Law with a drawn knife
and the intent to kill him. Whereupon
the Master of the Law rose up and be­
gan immediately to recite the name of
Buddha and a sutra. The barbarian sat
down again, only to stand up once
more after a little while. He said to the priest:

"According to the Law of the State, it is a most serious crime to go to a foreign state on your private wish. When you pass through the road beneath those five signal-fires, you will be caught for certain. Once you are arrested, you are a dead man! Since your student still has family obligations, how could I take this on myself! Imperial Law cannot be breached. Let me go back with the Master."

The Master of the Law replied, "Xuanzang can only die facing the West, but I vow I shall not return East and live. If my patron cannot do this, he is free to turn back. Let Xuanzang proceed by himself." 13

Though flavored perhaps with the hyperbolic accent of hagiography, this short tale also rings true at another level with dramatic irony. For the priest stubbornly committed to his journey to the West, it took a barbarian (hu) to remind a Tang subject of his own social reality to which both of them were subject, and to point out both the nature and risk of his illicit action. The word I translated as "private wish" is si, a word as old as the Classic of Documents (Shujing) that stretches through Warring States texts (e.g., Analects, Laozi, Mencius, Lüshi Chunqiu) and the Han Compendium of Ritual (Liji) to denote all that is personal, self-regarding, self-directed, and self-motivated. 14 In pre-modern China's rigid taxonomy of both social structures and human affects, whatever outside the domain of state governance and power (gong) is si, including even clan or household kin (e.g., Zuo Commentary, Duke Xuan 17). Whatever human motive or action not originating from state or, in a household or clan, parental authority is si, and thus private desire and personal possession—inclusive of space and time—always exist in the parlous potential of selfishness. This predominantly negative assessment of the personal, in fact, is what led eventually to the escalating debate on gong and si among many Ming-Qing Confucian elites when they began to question, ever so cautiously, the origin, maintenance, and limit of imperial power. 15 To the Tang barbarian, however, Xuanzang's act of seeking the Dharma in the West, however noble, still falls within the realm of the private, and thus violates the law of state that brooks no rivalry.

Against the state's initial refusal of travel permission and the specific warning by the barbarian recounted in the two biographies, Xuanzang's resistance is portrayed in a language normally reserved in Chinese writings for exemplary political subjects. The FSZ says that the priest refused to bow or bend (bu qiu), a phrase recalling the defiant stance of countless patriots celebrated for their undying loyalty. His own words represented in the Obituary indicates that he was clearly ready to pay the supreme sacrifice for the decision of seeking scripture.

It is of great interest to me as I re-read the story of Xuanzang today that he did not attempt to justify his undertaking in terms of what great boon he was hoping to obtain for his nation or even his people. His passionate commitment to his long, hazardous pilgrimage and its stupendous achievements, in any final assessment, must be honored and recognized first and foremost as an act of religious devotion. In the twentieth century, Hu Shi has called Xuanzang "China's first oversea student (di yi ge Zhongguo liuxue sheng)," and this epithet has been invoked many times since. 16 Although I have no wish to belittle the priest's intellectual and scholastic accomplishments, I must emphasize that to treat him only as a scholar is to miss both the power of his personality and the significance of his undertaking. Trained first in Confucian ethics and politics to revere without reservation both sovereign and the state, Xuanzang nonetheless by his action indicated his belief that there was a demand, an obligation, and a law that were higher than any norm or form of authority sanctioned by his native tradition. His thoughts, words, and deeds recorded in those early segments of his biographies were as "scandalous" as the sixth-century Parthian dumping all his wealth into a river after he heard Buddhist preaching, for neither motivation could find adequate explanation in strictly secular terms. 17 Xuanzang had to go to India because his religion compelled him, and because he regarded those missing scriptures and unclarified teachings as a supreme good for his own people. When the imperial court said no, he disobeyed. The disobedience, in Chinese understanding, was already political rebellion, but such an act for Xuanzang clearly had its own justification that, at the same time, was indisputably at odds with the most cherished ideals of his native culture. Like the early Christians refusal to worship Caesar because of their faith in the assertion, "Kyrios Christos or Christ is Lord," Xuanzang's actions, from his youthful dedication, through secret defiance of royal command, to prolonged endurance of hardships on his journey, were wrought and sustained by religious zeal.

To recognize the fideistic character of this Chinese monk's person and deed is also to put his intellectual and scholastic achievements in the proper context and perspective. Xuanzang, let me emphasize again, did not take on such enormous risk and suffering incurred by that lengthy journey to India merely for material gain, for himself or for his family. Indeed, his entire vocation, we should remember, placed no emphasis on that aspect of his existence, for he had to take a vow of poverty along with that of celibacy. Although history has firmly recorded the fact that he received abundant imperial favor and even was named a "national treasure (guo bao)" by the emperor upon his return, one could hardly assert that such reception and outcome were his expectation during his furtive flight from China.

Although immersed in the Confucian ideals of his own heritage, Xuanzang did not aspire to serve China through officialdom, through the rigors and rewards of either civil or military service. He did not go to India because he wanted...
more knowledge of statecraft or commerce. His mental and educational pursuits, from the time of his early teens, were singularly focused on studying some of the most abstruse and abstract texts in the Buddhist canon. The so-called Consciousness-Only School of Buddhism (weishi zong) to which he had been attracted at an early age has been understood, in his time and ours, as philosophically one of the most demanding divisions of that religion. The complexity of both text and doctrine, in fact, makes apparent the reason why such writings were not available in any significant amount through translation in Tang China. To seek out the most venerated writings of his denomination with a hope eventually to make them available to his own people, he accepted the arduous task of mastering one of the world’s most difficult languages. His success enabled him to give to the Chinese people in their own script 75 volumes or 1,341 scrolls of Buddhist writings, surpassing the accomplishment of any scriptural translator in previous Chinese history. Those specimens of his intellect not only represented some of the best translations of Buddhist texts up to his time and beyond, but they also bequeathed to posterity instructive examples of how Indo-European languages were studied and understood in medieval China, including the invaluable knowledge of grammar, syntax, and phonology. Finally, the record of his protracted travel that he wrote down on the so-called Western territories (Du Tang xiyou ji) not only won him deserved recognition from the throne as a master savant of other lands and peoples; the work itself also has justly been hailed as the first authentic work of geography authored by a Chinese.

For these monumental achievements, Xuanzang had won numberless accolades from his own people, but I wonder how many Chinese admirers even today would completely reckon with the momentous implication of the priest’s initial resolve. That single act of almost reckless daring represented nothing less than an audacious challenge to imperial power by a solitary youthful monk, while the single-mindedness of purpose that sustained the sixteen years of his itinerant quest and beyond bespoke total devotion to his faith. Anyone familiar with the history of Chinese Buddhism knows, of course, that the Tang pilgrim was hardly the first Buddhist lawbreaker, for thoughtful and faithful believers from even the early stage of Chinese Buddhism had felt obliged to advance stringent critiques of their own political culture and ideals. Already in the Wei-Jin period, according to a modern scholar, it was unquestionably assumed that the “Chinese Emperor . . . was . . . the Vicar of Heaven and Earth, the rightful source of all temporal authority. If certain persons failed to recognize that authority, it was through ignorance or out of malice, but it was never justifiable. Consequently the Chinese traditionalist could recognize no class of beings that is in the world but not of it. For such a person the Buddhist monk on Chinese soil was an intolerable anomaly.”

When the historical Xuanzang returned to China in 645 and found imperial favor almost immediately, it was to the credit of Emperor Taizong, then at the zenith of his power, that he did not find the monk’s person and accomplishments an anomaly. On the other hand, Xuanzang throughout his sojourn, as his biographers represented him, was careful to pay the most glowing tribute to his own sovereign. After emperor and monk had made acquaintance, the subject for the rest of his life always treated his ruler and the royal house with the greatest tact and circumspection, and the series of exchanged imperial rescripts and priestly memorials preserved in the second half of the FSZ fully revealed the intelligence and persuasive power of the monk’s rhetoric. Nonetheless, Xuanzang also was bold to acknowledge in his first memorial to the throne, seeking imperial pardon before he dared set foot again on Tang soil, that, “braving the transgression of the articles of law, he had departed for India on his own authority (si)” (FSZ 5. 126). That single act of admission undoubtedly represents candor and prudence, but it would also give the lie to myopic chauvinism that for the Chinese people, their sense of ultimate allegiance is likely always to derive from the comfort of communal sanction, the familiar ballast of family and state that is uniquely Chinese.

We now live in a disturbing moment of history when, in its determined efforts to modernize, the world’s most populous nation also has made it its constitutional requirement that any religious community or organization seeking legitimacy in its domain must first be certified as “patriotic.” The freedom to practice religion is guaranteed indeed, but only to those totally subservient to the state. Crossing the national border today, even if only in thought or in print, may prove to be just as risky and transgressive as our pilgrim’s secretive exit from his homeland. I wonder what the Chinese on the mainland and in diaspora globally, who find so many “anomalies” in the followers of Falun Gong, or Rebiya Kadeer, an Islamic woman just sentenced to eight years of prison for sending back copies of local newspapers to her exiled husband, would think of Xuanzang, our passionate pilgrim.

NOTES
1 The dates of the monk’s birth, departure for India, and death have been subjects of endless controversy in modern Chinese scholarship. I follow the conclusion reached by Liang Qichao, supported by Luo Xianglin and, more recently, by Master Yinzhi. Their studies have been collected conveniently in the two volumes (8 and 16) devoted to Xuanzang. See Xuanzang dashi yanjiu [Studies in Master Xuanzang], in the series Xiandaixue congkan [Series on contemporary Buddhist scholarship], ed., Zhang Mantao (Taipei: Dasheng [Mahayana] chubanshe, 1977). More debates on these dates are included in Vol. 16. Hereafter, the two volumes will be cited as XZYJ. The problem with the early date, however, is that it directly contradicts the statement of Xuanzang himself in his memorial to the Emperor Taizong during the final stage of his return journey: “in the fourth month of the third year of the Zhengguan reign period [i.e., 630], braving the transgression of the articles of law, I departed for India on my own authority.” The memorial, if
genuine, is preserved in Book 5, the first half of his biography compiled by Huili, generally regarded as the more reliable section of the work. See the modern critical edition of the Da Tang Da Ci’en shi Sanzang Fashi zhuang [Biography of Tripitaka, Master of the Law in the Great Ci’en Temple of the Great Tang], collected in Tang Xuanzang Sanzang zhuanshihui bian [Collected Materials on Biographies and Histories of Tripitaka Xuanzang of the Tang], ed., Master Guangzhong (Taipei: Dongda, 1988), p. 127. Hereafter, the work will be cited in the text as FSZ, with book and page numbers following. The discrepancy between the traditional date and the reconstructed one is usually explained on the basis of calligraphic similarity between the character for original/first (yuan), as in the “first year of the Zhengguan period,” and the one for three/third (san), thereby inducing mistranscription or misreading.

2 Luo Xianglin, “Jiu Tangshu Seng Xuanzang zhuang jiangshu [Explicatory Commentary on the Biography of the Monk Xuanzang in the Jiu Tangshu],” in ZXYJ, 16: 270.


7 In the year 742, according to Peter Hopkirk, the capital’s population was “close to two million (according to the census of 764, China had a total population of fifty-two million, and contained some twenty-five cities with over half a million inhabitants). Ch’ang-an which had served as the capital of the Chou, Ch’in and Han dynasties, had grown in a metropolis measuring six miles by five, . . . Foreigners were welcome, and some five thousand of them lived there. Nestorians, Manichaens, Zoroastrians, Hindus and Jews were freely permitted to build and worship in their own churches, temples and synagogues.” See Foreign Devils on the Silk Road (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1980), p. 28. Even this estimation of foreigners may be too small, for as early as 630, when the Tang Emperor Taizong assumed the title Heavenly Qaghan (tian kehan) at the request of China’s north-western peoples, thereby vanquishing the Eastern Turks who had been for centuries marauders of the country, the eventual imperial policy was to resettle them in Chinese territory. Of the some 100,000 Turks “placed along the Chinese frontier from Ho-pei to Shensi,” about “ten thousand eventually came to live in Ch’ang-an, and several of their tribal leaders received commissions as generals in the T’ang army.” See Howard J. Wechsler, “The founding of the T’ang dynasty: Kao-tsu (reign 618-26),” in The Cambridge History of China, eds. Denis Twitchett and John K. Fairbank, Vol. 3, Sui and T’ang China, 589-906, Part I (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 223.

8 See Arthur F. Wright, “Fu I and the Rejection of Buddhism,” in Studies in Chinese Buddhism, ed. Robert M. Sumner (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990), pp. 112-24. In The Journey to the West, these proposals were compressed and fictionalized into statements made in a debate with the ardent Buddhist official Xiao Yu (574-647) before the Tang Emperor Taizong, resulting in his commission of Xuanzang as the scripture pilgrim. Xiao Yu, incidentally, was thought by Arthur Waley as the official responsible for withholding the historical monk’s request for a passport to begin his quest in 627. See The Real Tripitaka and Other Pieces (New York: Macmillan, 1952). For the fictionalized account, see The Journey to the West, trans. Anthony C. Yu, 4 Vols. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1977-83), 1:262.


12 Hucker, p. 544.

13 Da Tang gu Sanzang Xuanzang Fashi xingzhuang [Obituary of Xuanzang Master of the Law, the late Tripitaka of the Great Tang], in Zhuanshi huibian, p. 289.

14 Exhorting his appointed officials, the king in the Classic of Documents said: “Oh! All you virtuous officials that I have, honor your charges, and be careful with the decrees you issue. Once issued, they must be executed and not retracted. When you use that which is public (gong) to eliminate that which is personal (si), the people will be gladly obedient.” See “Zhou guan (Zhou Officials),” in Shangshu jishi [Classic of Documents Collectively Annotated], ed. Qu Wani (Taipei: Lianjing, 1983), p. 325. Although this passage is likely apocryphal and dates to the Warring States period, the injunction to “use that which is public to eliminate the private (yi gong mie si)” has become an entrenched slogan from antiquity to the present.


16 See, for example, the essay by Li Dongfang in XZYJ, Vol. 16.


19 One oft-cited example of Xuanzang’s tribute to Taizong was the latter’s brief discourse on Chinese imperial virtues and accomplishments for King Harsha, the last of the great Buddhist rulers in India prior to Hindu and Islamic conquest (FSZ 5. 107).

20 The verdict on her crime was given as “revealing state intelligence” abroad, the “illegally giving of information across the border.” See The New York Times, Friday, April 28, 2000, A8.
Plenary Session
Liberal Arts Colleges in the 21st Century:
Their Future and That of Asian Studies
Thomas Coburn, Marianna McJimsey,
Toby Volkman, Thomas Benson

Framing the Issues
Thomas B. Coburn
St. Lawrence University

Let me welcome you to the opening of the ASIANetwork Conference and to this first plenary session. The origins of this session lie at the confluence of two different streams. One is the rising public discussion and analysis of the private liberal arts college, seen, for instance, in increasing concern for the costs and outcomes of education. This topic received its most sustained treatment in the January 1999 issue of Daedalus (soon to be republished as a book), entitled Distinctly American: The Residential Liberal Arts College. The second stream is the growing attention being paid to teaching about Asian Studies in those colleges, for instance, in the establishment of ASIANetwork itself eight years ago and, more proximately, in the publication of a volume supported by the Luce Foundation, Asia in the Undergraduate Curriculum: The Case For Asian Studies in Liberal Arts Education. The editors and chapter authors of that book have been active in ASIANetwork, and the vision for this plenary session has been to invite others to join in thinking about the shared future of Asian Studies and liberal arts colleges. My fellow panelists are Marianna McJimsey of Colorado College, where she works in undergraduate education and teaching licensure, who is well known to many as the former Executive Director of ASIANetwork; Dr. Toby Volkman of the Ford Foundation, which has been a generous supporter of ASIANetwork, who is the project director of Ford’s recent Crossing Borders initiative, and Dr. Tom Benson, President of Green Mountain College and, with David Vikner, the founding visionary of ASIANetwork.

First, some framing reflections on liberal arts colleges. These institutions have had a unique place in the American scene since the seventeenth century and for many years they were the only kind of post-secondary education available, created to provide educated leaders and an informed citizenry. They were supplemented by the growth of land-grant colleges in the nineteenth century and by the emergence in the twentieth century of what Clark Kerr called “multiversities,” both public and private, whose institutional mission was often research, with continuing—though sometimes grudging—attention to teaching undergraduates. Liberal arts colleges have persisted through all of this, while continuing to emphasize their teaching mission. (One college president I know has put this bluntly to incoming students and their parents by declaring that his college has no independent research mission. The point is that, while the college is very supportive of faculty scholarship, which remains important at time of tenure, the institution’s reputation does not depend on the research prowess of the faculty.) So our liberal arts colleges have persisted, albeit on a very small scale, whose very smallness is, I suspect, unknown to most college faculties as we get swept up in the particular excitements and daily demands of teaching and working at our particular institutions. The unvarnished fact is that there are about 2500 institutions of higher education in America today. Liberal arts colleges comprise a mere five percent of that total. We educate approximately two percent of the college-going population—all of whom would fit at the same time into the University of Michigan stadium.

But for all the near-microscopic size of our venture, we have a powerful and disproportionate influence on our students and on American society. For instance, of the thirty institutions with the highest ratio of doctoral to bachelor’s degrees—that is, institutions whose alumni ae go on to earn Ph.D.s—sixteen are private liberal arts colleges. ASIANetwork colleges are well represented on this list, which shows, for instance, that both Carleton and Kalamazoo produce more Ph.D.s per capita than does Harvard. Liberal arts colleges also produce Rhodes and Marshall Fellowship winners at double the per-capita rate of research institutions. Similarly, in 1990 ten percent of American’s foreign service officers and more than ten percent of her ambassadors were graduates of liberal arts colleges.

Smallness also characterizes each of our institutions, as well as the aggregate niche we occupy in the American scene, so it might well be asked whether the massiveness of Asia—with four of the world’s major civilizations and sixty percent of its population—does not preclude incorporating its study into our curricula. The very flourishing of ASIANetwork suggests a negative answer, and this year’s conference program is rich with practical solutions to the challenge. But there is a larger theoretical and pedagogical issue here. We Asianists are not alone in having to cope with knowledge too vast to fit easily into our curricula. We are not alone in having to combat what Ainslee Embree so delightfully calls the “lust for coverage.” Our colleagues in the natural sciences face a comparable dilemma, and there is cause for hope there in the findings of Project Kaleidoscope that
hands-on, lab-based, research-rich pedagogy leads to greater long-term learning than the “drink from the firehose,” raw-memorization-of-facts pedagogy. Recent advances in inquiry-based and problem-based learning, as well as the effectiveness of case-study methods, provide further reason not to be daunted by the massiveness of Asia and the challenge that lies before us.

There are further reasons why the very massiveness of Asia actually argues for its inclusion in the Western academy, indeed makes it imperative. Taking the long view of liberal education, one sees that for several hundred years there has been an uneasy tension between two strands within the basic educational vision. One has its origins in the Middle Ages and is rooted in the aspiration to transmit the essential elements of Western civilization. The other has its origins in scientific, empirical inquiry into the natural world. What has been construed recently as a battle over Western and multicultural curricula is actually only a skirmish in the longer, larger battle of the goals of liberal education. As Carnochan has noted, "'Ancients' and 'moderns' take their names originally from the ‘battle of the books’ fought in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries between defenders of ancient literature and learning and defenders of, among other things, the new science."4 Asia, we should note, has figured only marginally in this battle until very recently, appearing either as a by-product of the West’s interest in itself or as part of the empirical data, chiefly in the social sciences, of which the inquiring mind is challenged to make sense. But it is now, at this point in history, transparently clear that Asia is too big and, as Wilfred Smith has observed, we simply know too much for Asian Studies to fit easily within either of the older visions of the liberal arts. To incorporate Asian Studies responsibly into liberal education therefore holds out the delicious and daunting prospect of pushing us to reform the entire educational enterprise, seeking a new, comprehensive synthesis that has eluded Western educators for centuries. Liberal arts colleges, of course, cannot effect such a transformation alone, and there will remain critical roles for research institutions dedicated to the understanding of Asia. But liberal arts colleges have a distinctive legacy of teaching and learning with extraordinary effectiveness, with consequences for both our students and the wider world. Is there any reason to think we should now fail, that this new challenge should cause us to leave off from what we have historically done so very well?

The answer, unfortunately, may be yes—for the ground has shifted under our feet, the context of higher education has changed. Much of this is a change in the external environment, exposing us to new and powerful forces, most with an economic bite to them. Foremost among these, no doubt, is technology, with its crushing costs, which fall especially hard on small institutions. Related to this is the challenge of distance learning, which can strike at the heart of our long-standing affirmation of the importance of face-to-face interaction between faculty and student, and of co-curricular, residential education. Then, too, there is the vexing issue of financial aid and our efforts to ensure broad access to the education that our institutions provide. The challenge here is not just for us as individual institutions. It also raises large public policy questions. For instance, although roughly the same number of students are educated in private colleges and in public institutions in New York State, the average family income of students who attend public institutions is now higher than those attending private colleges. This trend is now well on its way to becoming a national one. Access to college by the very poor has actually declined over the past twenty years, abetted by the erosion of federal support. There are fewer liberal arts colleges today than there were twenty years ago. So it is by no means a foregone conclusion that liberal arts colleges will continue to flourish even in their current modest numbers. Our efforts to ensure that Asian Studies are part of the liberal arts college curriculum may therefore be moot. It may well be that the best we can hope for, those of us who work in these private liberal arts colleges, is to help these dinosaurs die a dignified death.

But we know more about dinosaurs, too, than we did twenty years ago, and it now appears that at least some of them, rather than becoming extinct, underwent an extraordinary evolutionary mutation into what we now know as birds. And so may our liberal arts colleges, with Asian Studies playing a critical role.

A single example may suffice. One way of characterizing what is happening in the academy today is traditional boundaries and units of analysis are eroding, even collapsing. Departments will surely not disappear soon, but the pervasive rise of interdisciplinary work suggests they will be less monopolistic, as new, even transitory, project-driven lines of inquiry open up. The college itself is less of an ivory tower than in times past, and service learning and internships have provided powerful new epistemologies and reaffirmations of the civic vision of liberal education, drawing colleges in fresh ways into the world around them. What used to be the reflectiveness associated with the life of the mind has become ever more elusive, thanks to the pace of contemporary life and to the technology that has become so woven into the fabric of our daily lives.

We Asianists have grappled with these and similar issues for a long time and throughout our professional lives. We have known that all knowledge is constructed, that the categories of construction are transient, and that disciplines are blunt instruments for capturing what we know of Asia. We have known the importance of “area studies” as an antidote to disciplinary hegemony, but we have known that “areas,” too, have porous boundaries, long before the rise of “diaspora studies.” We are also familiar with the importance of getting students to Asia, of linking first-hand experience with book study, of getting beyond the ivory tower. And we have known the joys and frustrations of fieldwork, where data and its analysis interpenetrate and challenge us to find the still-point where understanding might descend on us.

So I, for one, take heart, for I think Asian Studies is
coming over the horizon for liberal arts colleges at the very moment when those colleges need us most. We are familiar with a world of which our colleagues are only recently becoming aware. It is not just the world of Asia, but a world in which we grapple hard, and often haltingly, with basic questions about the organization of knowledge, the relationship between knowledge and experience, and the way education shapes our views of self and others. I am therefore optimistic about the contributions we Asianists can make to the renewal of the liberal arts colleges in which we teach. And I look forward now to hearing what my fellow panelists make of the juncture at which we find ourselves.

1 For elaboration on several points below, and references, see my contribution to Asia in the Undergraduate Curriculum: The Case for Asian Studies in Liberal Arts Education.


Opening a Window
Marianna McJimsey
The Colorado College

Our conversation this morning has the session title of Liberal Arts Colleges in the 21st Century: Their Future and that of Asian Studies. I suggest that one window on this topic is the AAS journal, Education About Asia, which has published ten issues since its inception in February 1996. I chose to open this window for a few minutes today for five reasons: first, because Education About Asia is a journal exclusively devoted to teaching about Asia and teaching is our mutual concern; secondly, because the Association for Asian Studies specifically commissioned Education About Asia to address the current teaching questions and interests of the profession; thirdly, because the journal builds bridges between K-12 schools and undergraduate institutions, and most ASIANetwork member institutions have teaching licensure programs which foster strong academic preparation for teaching; fourthly, because when one examines and compares the development of the ten issues of Education About Asia, one finds the changes in the content and organization over the last four years reflect the interests of pre-collegiate and undergraduate teachers; and finally, because the authors of the articles raise issues for the future of Asian Studies that we would be wise to examine and talk about.

The decade of the 1990s propelled conversations about teaching about Asia on all fronts. Among the engines of this propulsion were ten important developments:

1. In 1990, East-West Center president Victor Li warned that American education was not moving fast enough to accommodate the growing importance of Asia. His challenge led to the establishment of the Asian Studies Development Program (ASDP), co-directed by the East-West Center and the University of Hawaii. ASDP focuses on improving undergraduate-level teaching about Asia, and is especially helpful for faculty members who are not Asia specialists.

2. In 1992, the 500th anniversary of Columbus's 1492 voyage fostered a healthy and often even vitriolic reexamination of the global diaspora of seeds, germs, technology, science, and cultures that brought Asia into a picture that had often only included Europe and the New World. Old textbook accounts were re-written. K-12 teachers reviewed historiography and contributed important voices in the "seeds of change" curricula that grew out of the anniversary.

3. In 1993, our organization, the ASIANetwork, was founded to focus on teaching about Asia at undergraduate, liberal arts colleges.

4. In 1994, the National Geography Standards, "Geography for Life," spelled out the essential geographic subject matter, skills, and perspectives students should acquire logically and coherently during pre-collegiate and undergraduate education. Old geography paradigms changed; the study of continents no longer ruled.

5. In 1994, the cyberspace listserv, H-ASIA was launched by volunteer co-editors, Frank Conlon (U. WA) and Steven Leibo (State U. of NY at Albany). Subscribers from around the world signified the coming explosive use of the Internet. (A mere four years ago, in 1996, an issue of Teaching About Asia carefully defined for its readers, the Internet, the World Wide Web, servers, and browsers in terminology that today seems dated. The terms Internet, World Wide Web, server, and browser are now basic to our vocabulary. The speed of change has been extraordinary.)

6. The 6th engine to enhance teaching about Asia is a focus on teaching and learning. In the middle of the decade, before and after 1995, colleges and universities established teaching and learning centers devoted to issues of how we and our students learn and how that information should help us decide how and what we teach. (e.g., the Crown-Tapper Teaching and Learning Center at Colorado College)

7. For many years before the 1990s, foundations such as the Henry Luce Foundation, the Ford Foundation, and the Japan Foundation fostered and supported Asian Studies initiatives at the college and university level. In the 1990s, pre-collegiate teaching about Asia was enormously enhanced by foundation support such as that of the CGP (Center for Global Partnership) and the Freeman Foundation. The U.S.-Japan Foundation had provided similar support in the late 1980s for pre-collegiate education. Seminars, study tours, and resource centers have been generously sponsored by these foundations.

8. In 1996, after debates that even reached the floor of the United States Senate, some agreement for the National Standards for World History was finally achieved. Large-
scale processes such as interactions among people, including trade, pilgrimage, and migrations are emphasized. Civilizations are compared and students examine how cultural values, ideas, and knowledge have spread to and been adapted from one area to another. Asia, Latin America, and Africa have finally been separated from colonial history in high school textbooks.

9. In 1996, AAS established the Buchanan Prize given annually to educators who develop teaching materials that deal exclusively with countries and cultures represented in AAS. The three winners have been Gary Makai of the Stanford University SPICE curriculum center; Lynn Parisi of the Social Science Education Consortium in Boulder, CO, and Steve Levine of the University of Montana for his artifact trunk, China Box.

10. In February 1996, the first issue of *Education About Asia* reached our desks. Lucien Ellington, the Pied Piper editor of EAA, the journal’s editorial board, and the AAS Board have created a journal to enhance student understanding of Asia, to build bridges between colleges, universities, and schools, to highlight good teaching, innovative pedagogy, and deepening understanding of subject matter, all aided by constant reflection and conversations with colleagues.

Over fifty articles and reviews by past and present ASIANetwork members have been published in the first four years of the journal. Over sixty articles and reviews by school teachers have appeared. Of the total number of contributors, the ASIANetwork and K-12 numbers are an impressive percentage. Certainly *Education About Asia* can claim to be a window on the concerns of ASIANetwork and the future of Asian Studies.

What then does the open window found in reading *Education About Asia* reveal about current teaching concerns in Asian Studies? The choice of themes is significant. Five of the ten issues have been thematic and those foci have been “Teaching about Religions of Asia;” “Teaching the Geography of Asia;” “Japan and U.S./Japan Relations;” “Asia in World History,” and, lastly, “Book Reviews,” with editor Lucien Ellington’s assurance that in the age of video and Internet, the book is still important.

In examining the ten issues, I found a pattern of questions: those raised by undergraduate teaching, those raised by K-12 teaching, and finally, common issues. My use of the pronouns “I” or “we” in the questions that have been posed in the articles is a collective “I” or “we,” often generalizing from the authors of several articles.

Among the concerns about teaching about Asia raised by undergraduate faculty are:

1. How can Asia be incorporated into the general education curriculum or the core curriculum, or how can we reach the great majority of American students who graduate from college with no discussion of Asia in their undergraduate education? Do our institutions encourage the study of Asia through distribution requirements or, in their absence, through advisors who encourage students to take non-Western courses?

2. How can I help students understand the constructed nature of knowledge? How can I include matters of power, gender, race, and class? How can we pick apart stereotypes and folk truths? How do I encourage the thoughtful consideration of multiple perspectives to do justice to contemporary knowledge of the cultures and peoples of Asia?

3. Are we confining ourselves by using traditional demarcations: East Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Central Asia? Should the content of Asian Studies be reorganized around new themes, such as a construct, which would bring together, for example, India and China, as a field for study? (Our keynote speaker Anthony Yu laid the foundation for just such a concept from the 7th century communications of travelers between India and China.)

4. How can I bring to life for my students quite alien cultural forms? How do we demystify the exotic? How do we deal with the problem of imaginative geography or “cultural fantasy-making,” such as the images of Nepal and Tibet as Shangri-La?

5. How can I help students comprehend both the immediacy and timelessness of events in the history of Asia? The vertical concepts of history of my American students are very short.

6. When studying modern South Asia, shouldn’t we emphasize the passage of ideas between Western figures and South Asian leaders and as well as introduce the influences on South Asia of other great civilizations?

7. My students think that the religions of Asia are static. Why do they miss the ambiguities and debates about ultimate concerns that characterize Hinduism and Taoism, for example. Why is Islam not included in the study of the religions of Asia?

8. Why is Korea overlooked in the study of East Asia? Why is Southeast Asia a neglected area for undergraduate courses?

9. How can we encourage the study of languages of other regions of Asia in addition to those of China and Japan?

The concerns of K-12 teachers who contribute to *Education About Asia*, include:

1. “The National Standards for World History: Exploring Paths to the Present” finally integrate world history rather than focusing on Western Civilization or area studies. Increasingly high schools are moving to a two-year history course that integrates U.S. history with global history. How can I accomplish this, given the local debates on issues of the place in the curriculum of the national history of the United States vs. global history?

2. How do I teach about Hinduism, Islam, Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism, or Shinto to middle and high school students? Students this age are concrete thinkers. How do I guide them in the direction of abstract thought in philosophy and religion?

3. How do I deal with the tendency of my students to see the Chinese, the Malaysians, the Koreans, etc. as the “other?” High school students arrive in my class with
Asian American students and recent immigrants from Asia who wish to know about the history of their ethnic and national groups.

5. Travel to Asia is very important for K-12 teachers who may not have studied about Asia. Education About Asia articles reflect on opportunities for K-12 teachers to travel and study in Asia including Fulbright Fellowships, National Council for the Social Studies grants such as the Keizai Koho Center which has taken over 500 teachers to Japan, the Korea Society programs, and study tours organized by the Outreach Programs such as those found at the University of Illinois, Indiana University, the University of Washington, the Five College Center in Massachusetts, the Social Science Education Consortium in Boulder, and Columbia University.

Some common general interests of both undergraduate faculty and K-12 teachers as reflected in the ten issues of Education About Asia include:

1. How do we utilize museums and material culture to teach about Asia?

2. How do we incorporate contemporary issues when students do not have good historical backgrounds? Should we do more with examination of the origins of conflict, with the influence of media, and with economic interdependence, not only between Asia and the U.S., but especially among the countries of Asia?

3. How do I find the time to winnow and select materials significant for my courses from the immense volume now available on the web? With volume #3, the second issue of Education About Asia, Web Gleanings became a regular feature. (I was amused to follow the career of its talented author, Judith Ames, who four years ago was working in educational outreach but now is the Coordinator of Customer Services of Motley Fool, an on-line investment company.)

4. A noticeable development over the four years of the journal has been an increase in notices and advertisements for study abroad opportunities. There has been an attendant interest in how to prepare students for study in Asia, and how to support the students when they return to their schools and campuses.

5. There have been a couple of feature articles on teaching resources that entirely bridge the middle school, high school, and college spectrum: One example is the novel, Lost Names, a fictional account of the Korean colonial experience. A reviewer noted, “Never in my time in Asian Studies has one work been so applicable to such a wide range of students as is the case with Lost Names.”

A second example of a resource that is broadly applicable in teaching is Richard Minear’s Doctor Seuss Goes to War. The book has been used in college classes. This spring in Boulder, Richard Minear worked with high school teachers for two days at a workshop using Doctor Seuss Goes to War as the central text.

6. Close to 150 books and films have been reviewed in the ten issues of Education About Asia, and over two-thirds of the reviewers have been drawn from college and university faculty and a little under one-third from school teachers. These are books and films that enhance and inform teaching whether one is teaching seventh grade geography or a course on Indonesia’s domestic policies. The breadth of the field from which reviewers have been drawn illustrates the commonality of teaching concerns of both pre-collegiate and undergraduate teachers.

In summary, the future issues in teaching about Asia, as revealed when we open the window of Education About Asia, include incorporating Asia into a core curriculum, not just nodding to but emphasizing Asia in World History courses, bringing multiple perspectives to the study of Asia; teaching the religions of Asia, adding the study of the geography of Asia to the undergraduate curriculum, using technology well in the classroom, enhancing further the study of South and Southeast Asia, and including a wider variety of the languages of Asia. ASIANetwork institutions are struggling with these issues; our colleges are in the enviable position of being able to experiment and revise as we work on these challenges. In Education About Asia, we have a forum in which we can converse.

I look forward to the continued role of Education About Asia as such a forum for teaching concerns and as a rich resource for teaching enhancement.

Where is Southeast Asia?

Toby Volkman
The Ford Foundation

In posing the question “where is Southeast Asia” in the liberal arts college curriculum, I hope to do two things. First, to call attention to a major area of the world that continues to be strangely neglected both in our educational institutions and in the public arena. And second, to generate some further reflections on the practice of area studies in the twenty-first century. The latter set of reflections builds in part on the experience I’ve had over the last six years as the program officer at the Ford Foundation responsible for rethinking the Foundation’s work in area studies.

The question comes from several sources. First, I confess to a personal motivation, having been trained as a scholar of Southeast Asia. More importantly, in spite of increasing prominence of some parts of the region in the news—for reasons other than earthquakes, volcanoes, or war—the fact remains that scholarship and teaching on Southeast Asia still tend to be concentrated in a very few, Title-VI funded National Resource Centers. Thus it comes as no surprise that in the very welcome Luce Foundation initiative in support of new faculty positions in Asian studies, Southeast Asia has been barely visible. In the first year of that program, of fifty-three proposals received, approximately one-and-a-half could be described as having a serious Southeast Asia focus. Of these, one was funded: a
Balinese theater position at College of the Holy Cross. I hasten to add that this situation is not unique to liberal arts colleges; several years ago, Southeast Asia was also largely absent from over 200 responses to a Request for Proposals issued by the Ford Foundation’s initiative, Crossing Borders: Revitalizing Area Studies (this included undergraduate and graduate institutions, but mostly the latter, throughout the United States).

There are undoubtedly many reasons for this absence, including the relative newness of the field in contrast to other long established “studies,” especially of East and South Asia; the relative fragmentation of the academic field, a reflection of the region’s own diversity (or, some would say, diffuseness). Nonetheless, it really is a remarkable absence, given the size and importance of the region, its religious, ethnic, and linguistic diversity; its environmental riches and problems; not to mention the extraordinarily dramatic economic crises (and to some extent, recoveries), and the political upheavals of the last few years, most notably Indonesia’s current experiment in democratic transition. Ironically, the very diversity that some of us find compelling may have produced its marginality—unlike China, Japan, and India, which dominate the liberal arts college Asian Studies curriculum, Southeast Asia cannot lay claim to “civilizations” in the great and capital C (and presumably “coherent”) sense that these other regions do. There are no thick anthologies that boast titles like “Southeast Asian Tradition” or “The Wonder that was Southeast Asia.” And then, of course, there are so many practical reasons. Southeast Asian languages are many; most are hard to learn, rarely taught, and often one is not enough. Nancy Florida, who teaches Javanese literature at the University of Michigan, has noted that to be a scholar in her field one needs not only to know Javanese, but to study Arabic and Indonesian (and, if she is to deal with colonial literature, Dutch). Learning Chinese begins to seem rather straightforward in comparison.

These sorts of problems—and the more general problem of how to imagine an area studies that could deal at once with local specificity and increasingly trans-local or globalizing processes and interconnections—inspired the initiative at the Ford Foundation known as Crossing Borders: Revitalizing Area Studies. This initiative was launched in 1997 in order to “revitalize” this field in essentially two, conjoined ways: first, by continuing to support in-depth study of language, culture, history, and place; and second, by stretching the older area studies to examine connections, linkages, interrelationships—transnational, global, oceanic, diasporic, and so on—among these languages, cultures, histories and places. We argued that both the world and scholarship are in motion, and that what we need is a series of experiments, explorations of new ways of conceptualizing areas and their relationships. Such explorations, we suggested, would necessarily entail new participants, most notably scholars or intellectuals from regions formerly simply the objects of study. It followed from this that the U.S. or North America would also be an “area” in a new, more vital, area studies.

Experiments, of course, may be hard to justify to deans; they may not appear to be “strategic,” or to build on existing strengths. Yet the best experiments can do so. Take for example the Holy Cross example mentioned above. Building on Southeast Asia expertise in several disciplines, especially the performing arts, and on several years of productive experience with a campus gamelan and visiting Indonesian artists, Holy Cross developed a proposal to create not simply a faculty position in Balinese music, dance, and theater, but a rotating one, designed to bring a different faculty person every three to four years from Indonesia. This actually was an ingenious solution to the Indonesian partner institution’s concern with losing talent to the U.S., and gaining nothing in return. The result promises to bring added value to both sides: the presence of Southeast Asian faculty will bring new perspectives to Holy Cross, and upon their return to Indonesia these scholar-artists will surely bring new ideas home. If successful, the networks and ongoing exchanges thus created should contribute to the intellectual/artistic life of institutions both here and there.

The sorts of experiments that are appropriate for one institution may be wildly inappropriate in another; there are no cookie-cutter solutions. In many Crossing Borders projects, collaborations of various kinds have proven productive. Such collaborations may be across institutions: the Five Colleges project, for example, involved interdisciplinary team teaching across the various institutions in that consortium. Other collaborations are within institutions; again, team teaching may bring new disciplinary as well as regional expertise and perspectives to students (and faculty). Columbia University’s new Center for the Study of Comparative Literature and Society, for example, links comparative literature faculty with colleagues in area studies, law, and architecture. At the University of Chicago, a project known as “Regional Worlds” brings faculty from Midwestern colleges together with a core of University of Chicago faculty to take part in regular seminars and workshops on rethinking “geographies.” A project organized by the University of Hawaii involves collaboration at multiple levels: across Asian and Pacific studies within the university, across disciplines, and with colleagues and a diverse array of institutions in Japan, Taiwan, the Philippines, and on the tiny Pacific island of Palau.

Transnational collaboration is beyond the scope of most liberal arts colleges, but the Hawaii effort—one of many projects that questions received notions of “area”—suggests an approach that may be worth considering on a less ambitious scale. The project, “Moving Cultures: Remaking Asia-Pacific Studies,” explores the growing presence of Asia in the Pacific, and how that presence is transforming local cultural, political, and economic dynamics. Among its several components is a redesigned undergraduate core curriculum that looks at flows of capital, people, and ideas linking disparate parts of the region and the “moving cultures” they create. Although this project originally took a distant island (Palau) as its focus, its use of interdisciplinary teams could analyze the complex layering of local and transnational forces
suggests an approach that could be viable for sites much closer to home sites. In fact the second stage of “Moving Cultures” includes Hawai as a “site.” One could imagine similar approaches to globalizing cities or sites elsewhere.

Viewing cultures as always in motion demands a far more fluid sort of geography. Duke University’s Crossing Borders project, “Oceans Connect,” is a practical exploration of the implications of the arguments propounded by Martin Lewis and Karen Wigen in The Myth of Continents: A Critique of Metageography. The Duke project calls for a change of focus, from landmasses to ocean basins and the historical as well as contemporary transactions that are shaped across the waters. Might this new geography allow us to teach about Southeast Asia in the liberal arts college in a more relational way? To bring in Southeast Asia in the context of universities with entrenched departments and turf wars? Is projects, noting that such a strategy is most possible in liberal student interest in the Vietnam War still strong, and how of disciplines. Are there creative ways of pooling expertise, of ideas of knows about environmental or women’s movements, and America, but in Vietnam itself and the wider region? Might such interest be tapped to catalyze interest not just in Asianists, faculty are exploring teaching strategies that teach it, or that thematic expertise alone suffices—so that one does not need to know much about the area in order to teach or that thematic expertise alone suffices—so that one can teach environmental or women’s movements if one knows about environmental or women’s movements, and one does not need to know Southeast Asia. That is definitely not what I wish to suggest. I suspect, however, that many liberal arts college faculty have grappled with the question of how one can teach Southeast Asia (or its equivalent) in an institution that lacks specialists on all 10 countries in a range of disciplines. Are there creative ways of pooling expertise, sharing across departments and institutions, perhaps even internationally? Are there opportunities to join forces with ethnic or diaspora studies programs, if such exist? Are there students of Southeast Asian descent who can, or wish to, be brought into such an effort? Or are these too small a presence, especially when compared with Chinese- or Korean-American students? Might these efforts be more promising, and less fraught, than they sometimes are at research universities with entrenched departments and turf wars? Is student interest in the Vietnam War still strong, and how might such interest be tapped to catalyze interest not just in America, but in Vietnam itself and the wider region?  

In the fortunate colleges that do have Southeast Asianists, faculty are exploring teaching strategies that stretch, expand, and enrich the idea of both Asia and Southeast Asia. In some instances this involves incorporating large amounts of Asia content, including Southeast Asia, into non-area courses. In her essay in Asia in the Undergraduate Curriculum, Rita Kipp suggests that “complicating” students’ ideas of “China” or “India” are among the most basic tasks of teachers of Asian studies. I would add that teaching Southeast Asia provides numerous ways to complicate—to question and enrich—what may be students’ notions of monolithic civilizations, or even of “Asia.” Kipp also makes a case for teaching what she calls “Asian Studies Plus”: engaging regional expertise with comparative and theoretical projects, noting that such a strategy is most possible in liberal arts colleges where faculty must be generalists. Barbara Andaya describes, in a recent Association of Asian Studies newsletter, undergraduate courses that she teaches at the University of Hawaii organized around crosscutting themes rather than conventional cartography. Thus a gendered map of Asia may include Southeast Asia, Sri Lanka, southern China, and parts of India. Another map may start with trade-based ties that link Laos, Thailand, Burma, and China. The “region” may not be the appropriate frame: at the University of Victoria, Helen Chauncey was pleasantly surprised to find that student interest in the international dimensions of genocide enabled her to engage students in the study of complex Cambodian history.

One of the interesting discoveries that has emerged from Crossing Borders is a sense that there is interest and excitement at the undergraduate level in what seems to be captured under the International Studies framework—some kind of a middle ground between a “traditional” area studies in which one learned a body of knowledge—everything you could possibly know about a particular part of the world—and an international relations “view from nowhere.” The emerging International Studies seems to be on the one hand rooted in some area-based knowledge (along with some language, and perhaps a field experience abroad) and on the other linked to asking questions of topical, even theoretical interest. This suggests an inversion of an older model, whereby area studies knowledge trickled down, at best, to college students. Might we be seeing the inklings of a new kind of knowledge production—concerned with the shifting relationship between place and culture? Might the liberal arts colleges provide the flexibility and wonderfully fertile seedbeds for interdisciplinary exploration that could nurture such new knowledge? And might those explorations, in turn, actually transform the way graduate area studies are taught and practiced?

1 I thank Terry Lautz and Helena Kolenda of the Henry Luce Foundation for helpful comments on this essay.
3 For a critique of “civilizational thinking,” see the Crossing Borders project at the University of California, Santa Cruz. This and other Crossing Borders projects are described on a website to be launched in late winter, 2001: www.crossing-borders.net.
4 ASIANetwork summer programs in Southeast Asia (and other parts of Asia) have provided some faculty with introductions to the region. And, since 1991, the Asian Studies Development Program, a joint project of the East-West Center and the University of Hawaii, has been organizing faculty development programs designed to infuse Asian content into undergraduate courses in the social sciences and the humanities. Such programs serve two-year and four-year colleges and universities, including minority-serving universities. In the summer of 2000, ASDP held its first Infusing Institute focused on Southeast Asia.
Asian Studies and the Liberal Arts:  
A Paradigm for Reform  
Thomas L. Benson  
Green Mountain College

The changes sweeping through higher education are without precedent in their scope and portent. Every aspect of the enterprise is in flux: mission, methods, financing, and structure. The nation’s liberal arts colleges are being hit especially hard by the changes. Lacking both the resources and the more pragmatic orientation of the larger public institutions, a growing number of liberal arts colleges are struggling as never before to remain competitive and to retain their historic identities.

For several decades, with a quickening pace, the liberal arts colleges have followed the patterns of the large public universities and the top tier research institutions. Responding to heightened competition from the public campuses, many liberal arts colleges expanded their pre-professional and career programs and hired specialized staff and faculty to deliver these programs. At the same time, eager to attract and to retain outstanding young faculty, liberal arts colleges made sacrifices to offer enhanced opportunities for scholarly pursuits; and with this, productivity in research and creative endeavors acquired a much larger place in faculty evaluation.

Given the competitive pressures and the alternatives, the adaptive behavior of the liberal arts colleges made rough sense. In the bargain, however, on many campuses, liberal arts values have been increasingly marginalized both in the curriculum and in the professional priorities of the faculty. Now, faced with the dramatic changes overtaking higher education, many of the historic liberal arts colleges resemble not much more than smaller, poorer, and generally less impressive versions of the large universities. Much of their historic capital, the intellectual nest egg, has been spent on survival driven initiatives that hold only modest promise in a brave new competitive environment, where high-tech instructional delivery systems, strategic alliances linking campuses and corporations, and proprietary management values are reshaping or, better, replacing higher education.

The banner of the liberal arts may still be waved and many faculty may still understand themselves as its standard bearers, but the power, stature, and appeal of the liberal arts curriculum has been significantly degraded on many campuses.

It is late, but not too late for some of the liberal arts colleges to reclaim important elements of their heritage. Ironically, just as survival needs led many to assign a substantially reduced role for the liberal arts, some institutions may now find that their survival depends on a creative revival of liberal arts values. In a time of balkanized academic programs and campuses, “value-lite” instruction, and de-personalized instructional technologies, there is a promising opening for undergraduate institutions that articulate and deliver powerful liberal arts education. The ever shrinking half-life of “cutting edge” career fields and the threatened obsolescence of related academic programs, as well as the much noted tendency of latter-day college graduates to make several career shifts, provide strong evidence for the value of a more basic, comprehensive, and versatile educational program. The explosive growth of interest in life-long learning programs and Chautauqua-style educational opportunities also points to the promising possibilities for wider liberal arts programming.

Although the liberal arts tradition in American higher education is rooted in Western classical ideals and in the practices of the medieval university, there are important and useful parallels to be found in non-Western educational thought. In the effort to restore the liberal arts to a more influential role in the life of the institution, help may be found in a variety of quarters. Asian studies faculty may offer valuable assistance. On many campuses represented in the ASIANetwork, the Asian studies programs admirably reflect the core values of liberal arts education.

In at least three important areas, Asian studies faculty can contribute to a revitalization of undergraduate liberal arts education. First, Asian studies faculty practice a variety of interdisciplinary education that is rare among the traditional liberal arts disciplines. Asian studies faculty typically work in an interdisciplinary context, crossing disciplinary and departmental lines and linking, among other fields, history, literature, language studies, politics, religion, and the arts. This is in striking contrast to the narrow, disciplinary focus of the traditional liberal arts fields. The “divide and tunnel” pattern in higher education persists, notwithstanding many years of criticism and appeals for interdisciplinary reform. A student majoring in, say, history, philosophy, or literature in the latter-day liberal arts college will ordinarily acquire a strong foundation in the disciplinary tradition, but all too often receive little direction or encouragement in exploring connections among the traditions. The Asian studies major, on the other hand, cannot escape traveling across disciplinary boundaries and pursuing integrative objectives. Asian studies programs exhibit the power of interdisciplinary education, and, as such, they have the potential of serving as an inspiration and model for change in the traditional liberal arts programs.

Asian studies programs may also have a helpful influence in a second area where the traditional liberal arts appear to have lost much of their following, if not their way. The liberal arts disciplines have become increasingly disengaged, self-absorbed, arcane, and devoid of useful news for the wider world. While it may be unreasonable to expect the liberal arts disciplines to define their central task as the illumination of contemporary life, it is not too much to ask for some light on the subject. In assessing the involuted proceedings of mid-twentieth century moral philosophy, H.D. Aiken once remarked: “What we require is not metaethics but ‘betta’ ethics.” Arrested by the fashions, imperatives, and intellectual politics of the professional subcultures, too many liberal arts faculty ignore opportunities to engage contemporary social issues and to think
systematically about scholarship and teaching in rough and occasional service to human need. Bruce Kimball, in his landmark study of the origins and development of the liberal arts ideal, *Orators and Philosophers*, argues that there are two major currents running through the history of the liberal arts tradition: the philosophical school, associated initially with Socrates and Plato, and the oratorical school, founded by Isocrates and sustained by Cicero and Quintillian. While the former school showed a relative indifference to the study and cultivation of practical citizenship, emphasizing instead truth for its own liberating sake, the orators made political service and social values the cornerstone of enlightened education. In our time, faced with planet engulfing challenges—seemingly intractable poverty in many parts of the third world, mounting environmental degradation, dangerous new terrorist movements, and revolutionary technologies whose full implications are little understood—one hopes for a revival of the emphasis on social values associated with the oratorical liberal arts heritage.

In complex ways, Asian studies programs provide some of the elements of social engagement that are underdeveloped in the contemporary liberal arts disciplines. To some extent, this is a natural function of the non-Western focus of Asian studies programs. Coming to terms with other cultures both rewards serious engagement with such traditions and stimulates, however indirectly, fresh comparative understanding of one’s own cultural heritage. Asian studies programs offer exciting opportunities to reflect on the relationship between the values and cultural institutions of Asian societies and the present-day challenges they face. To be sure, many Asian studies courses lie at a considerable distance from contemporary social problems. Taken together, however, the elements in a strong Asian studies program promote an integrated understanding of one or more non-Western cultures and an appreciation for both cultural diversity and our common humanity.

One of the most stubborn criticisms of the liberal arts tradition in contemporary higher education is that it focuses too heavily on the talented few, intellectually stranding the larger number of students who are not destined for graduate study in the discipline. The future graduate student may well come to know the satisfactions of the initiate, but the balance of the class too often find themselves without any passion for the discipline and lacking both mastery and meaning. This third area of concern with the practice of the liberal arts derives in part from peculiar teaching values and methods, but it also owes to the already noted disciplinary parochialism and social disengagement.

Asian studies programs offer rich opportunities for a more comprehensive enlistment of student interests. The interdisciplinary character of the field and a vital engagement with non-Western cultures appeal to the student’s imagination and appetite for intellectual discovery. In addition, allied language programs and study abroad experiences may contribute to levels of interest and personal meaning rarely found in traditional liberal arts programs. There are, to be sure, bored and unsuccessful Asian studies students, but the very nature of the field and the creative ways in which many undergraduate programs have been designed provide helpful resistance to such failure.

There is no claim here that Asian studies programs are abstractly utopian or uniformly excellent, nor that Asian studies can or should save the traditional liberal arts disciplines from the ravages of time, the shifting patterns of educational purpose, or themselves. What I am suggesting is that Asian studies faculty and programs on many campuses represent the liberal arts at their best: connected, engaged, and meaningful. In making the case for both the importance of the liberal arts and the need for fresh thinking about how the liberal arts should be taught, it would be useful to train a light on the impressive work to be found in our Asian studies programs. Much can be learned from these programs about creative liberal arts pedagogy and about more powerful means of reinvigorating the liberal arts curriculum.

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From Wise Mother/Good Wife to Women Who Kill: Images of Women and Transcultural Feminism in Modern Korean Drama

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In 1979, the book *Feminine Mystique* by Betty Friedan was translated into Korean and introduced to the Korean public. Around this time, for the sake of women themselves, the Korean version of second-wave feminism began. By the early 80s, a small coterie of women's groups, such as the People's Friends Group (Minwhoe) and the Alternative Culture (Tohana ui Munhwa), formed. Notable about these groups is that their leaders were Korean women intellectuals, usually professors who were educated in the U.S. and Europe, and that these groups were formed as women mentors passed down their acquired knowledge and ideas about feminism to their women students. Thus the second wave of the Korean women's movement was generated from the upper social strata with the introduction of Western feminist thought, and it naturally took a considerable length of time for these foreign (Western) ideas to take root in a totally different cultural soil.

This paper examines 1) how Western feminism, once introduced into Korea underwent certain modifications to accommodate the needs of a differing cultural context and 2) against this backdrop, how Korean women's drama represents ideas of Korean feminism, the result of such cultural interactions.

I need to contextualize my discussion by briefly mentioning the historical background of Korean feminism. It was in the late 1800s when Christianity and formal education for women were introduced from the West, that Korea was exposed to the historical momentum to liberate its women. Christianity, although a patriarchal religion in the West, effected, in the Korean social context, the liberation of women from the confinement within women's quarters in the home, as well as equality of the sexes as it permitted both husbands and wives to attend services side by side. Also during the same period, schools for girls, established by American women missionaries, made a great contribution in bringing about a significant “revolution” in the consciousness of Korean women.

The stated educational goal for these girls’ schools was not revolutionary. Their goal was “not to make women independent members of society to compete with men, but to equip them with a wider vision as mothers with the important mission of educating their children.” Part of the reason for this seemingly “conservative line” of educational strategies by American missionaries seems to have resulted out of consideration for the strongly patriarchal nature of the hosting culture. (History of Korean Women, Seoul: Ewha Women's University Press, 1972, p. 152)

By the 1920s, there appeared the first generation of Korean New Women, who were educated with modern values such as individualism, freedom of love and marriage, and equality between the sexes. Most of these New Women (such as the first modern Korean woman painter Na Hye-sok, and Korea’s first soprano Yun Sim-dok) practiced these newly-acquired ideas in their lives vis-a-vis the Confucian stereotype of the Wise Mother/Good Wife, and as a result, ended tragically.

Though seemingly rebellious, these Korean feminists shared a staunch belief in heterosexual love and the institution of the patriarchal family. Values such as independence in the pursuit of one’s career apart from the family were undervalued. This strong family orientation also characterized the Korean version of the first-wave women's movement at the turn of this century. Korean women formed women's organizations such as the Women's Friendship Association (Yowuhoe) in 1898, which waged a sit-in demonstration against concubinage in front of the king's palace. Another, the Women's Association for National Reparation (Kukchae Paesang Puinhoe) which was formed in 1907, participated in activities to raise money to pay back the nation's debt to Japan.

These women's organizations waged activities expanding the mothering role at home to the national level, and promoted patriotism. They made a great contribution to the March 1st Independence Movement in 1919 under Japanese rule, but after the 1930s became dormant due to the oppression of Japanese rule.

The second wave of the Korean women's movement re-emerged in the late 1970s. For the small coterie group-based women's movement to take root, however, it had to come to terms with the patriarchal culture of the larger society.

In this culture founded on Confucian, Buddhist and Taoist cultural complex, yin and yang are not binary opposites but complementary essential forces, and the family is the place where harmony between these two forces can materialize in human terms.

Family-oriented values continued to characterize the Korean women's movement in the 1980s and the 1990s as well. Among the hot women's issues were wife-rape and the resulting family disintegration, and the institution of preventive law against domestic violence. Sexual harassment issues attracted only incidental attention in the wake of the Anita Hill and Clarence Thomas case in the early 1990s. The Korean version of a sexual harassment case, however, the Assistant Ms. Woo Case, in which a student assistant accused a male professor of the Seoul National University of sexual harassment, was lost in a lawsuit after long exhausting trials over several years.

Now, against this family-oriented backdrop of Korean feminism and the women's movement, I would like to examine how Korean women's dramas embody this cultural difference as a representational system. It was in the late 1950s that the
first generation of professional women playwrights such as Kim Ja-rim and Park Hyon-suk made their debut. The themes that they pursued most frequently in their plays were freedom of love and marriage, and husband and wife relationships centering on the wife’s reactions to the husband’s infidelity. They did not yet raise questions about the institution of marriage itself, and even their dissatisfaction with the husbands was expressed in a “womanly,” roundabout way.

For example, Kim’s play Whirling Wind (1958) deals with three generations of widowed women in a household, a grandmother, a mother and a daughter with different values regarding love and marriage. Daughter Ki-suk, the central character, wants to remarry but her grandmother and mother strongly oppose it, saying that “a virtuous woman should follow and obey only one husband,” the traditional morality for women which both of the women faithfully lived by after they became widows. Ki-suk, however, wins the conflict with her mother and grandmother regarding her remarriage, and chooses her own partner for love.

In Park’s Masquerade (1976), a women character named Wife rebels against her unfaithful husband. To carry out her revenge, she goes secretly to a masquerade and is matched with her own husband as her masked partner. But they find out about each other in a hotel room. The man and his wife suddenly become very generous in forgiving each other and making up. This reversal of plot line for comic effect and the happy ending can be read as Park’s “womanly” way of lodging a veiled criticism, trying to save the face of patriarchy in the name of unholyful husbands.

Thus, these plays voice a distinctly women’s point of view, but the playwrights’ concern lies rather in improving the husband-wife relationship within marriage. Kim succinctly expresses this point: that more opportunities should be made accessible to women. At the same time men must not be openly challenged as a reaction to the age-old subordination of the opposite sex, and women should still acknowledge sexual differences and recognize that competition beyond sex lines is not equality.

Around the mid-1980s women’s drama as a distinctly professional genre began to emerge on the Korean stage. One such moment is marked by the performance of the play A Woman in Crisis (Wigi ui Yoja), adapted from Simone de Beauvoir’s novel in 1986 by the Sanwullin theater group. Actually this play recorded a stunning box-office success and stimulated the staging of more women’s dramas.

One of the main sources for this play’s wide appeal to middle-class Korean wives is its theme: the central character Monique’s internal journey to find herself, provoked by her husband’s infidelity after twenty-some years of married life. In a strongly male-dominated culture where divorce is such a social taboo especially for women, and where men are still the privileged breadwinners, upper-middle class Korean wives seemed to have found in this play a source of empathy, identification and certain consolation.

Many similar plays followed suit. A major female playwright, Chong Pok-kun, created a Korean version of A Woman in Crisis in What is the Matter with You, Honey? (1988), with a slightly modified ending. In a one-woman monodrama, the character Wife, who is also a middle-aged, upper-middle class woman, exposes her feelings of betrayal and despair when confronted with her husband’s infidelity. But she ends her story by saying that she forgives her husband for his human failings and weaknesses. She concludes that it is because she accepts “her destiny.” (Chong Pok-kun, What is the Matter with You, Honey? (Wenil Iseyo. Tangs in), unpublished script, 1988).

Entering the 1990s, divorce and the institution of marriage began to be questioned more seriously, as a batch of younger generation women playwrights made their debut. Also by the early 1990s, Marsha Norman’s ‘Night, Mother, Caryle Churchill’s Cloud Nine and Top Girls (1993), Nell Dunn’s Steaming (1991), and Wendy Wasserstein’s Uncommon Women were introduced to the Korean stage, and made considerable contributions in familiarizing Korean audiences with the sense and sensibilities of Western women’s drama.

Of these, ‘Night, Mother and Steaming won considerable commercial success, mainly because of the moderate theme of the mother-daughter relationship and the excellent performance by Park Chong-ja in ’Night Mother. The bathhouse scene in Steaming, where women characters appear half-naked with towels around their bodies, a rare scene thus far on the Korean stage, especially appealed to male audiences.

In addition to this, by the early 1990s, stories of sexual harassment and domestic violence such as the Anita Hill and the Bobbitt cases made their way to the Korean public and caused repercussions in Korean society and women’s drama as well.

Playwright Chong Pok-kun revised her original text of Cello (1994) to reflect the changing sensibilities in creating Yunhi, the central woman character, who this time rebels against the male order by attempting an extra-marital love affair at the cost of her marriage. This play was an overwhelming commercial success with middle-aged upper-middle class wives in Seoul. In this play, Yunhi, another upper-middle class wife, actively seeks an escape from her meaningless married life with a successful businessman who is dominating and habitually unfaithful. She falls in love with a man of the working class, challenging the social stereotype of the “Virtuous Woman”. But later her lover has a change of heart, and leaves her. Left to herself, she finally reaches a certain self-realization. She says:

Probably I wasn’t looking for someone. I just wanted to be myself and that is why I had this affair. I’ll face trial, go to jail, and will pay for my own sin. After all that... I would like to live the rest of my life as myself, not as somebody’s someone. (27)

Actually, as a character Yunhi shows considerable transformation from the woman character who “accepts her destiny” with her incompatible husband in a 1988 work by the same playwright. But the process through which she
arrives at self-recognition is forced by her lover's desertion of her rather than being voluntarily initiated.

By the mid-1990s, however, the institution of marriage came under closer scrutiny by the younger generation of women writers in their thirties. They showed unique candidness and vehemence in dealing with subjects such as marriage, divorce, sex-roles, sexuality and other women's questions.

One such younger generation woman playwrights, Kim Yun-ni, contrasts the stories of two women in her play titled *A Married Woman and an Unmarried Woman* (1996): Jong-ae, a middle-class full-time housewife by an arranged marriage, and Su-in, a career copywriter single woman. Here again the commonality between these two women is their problematic love relationships with men. Jong-ae, the housewife, had to give up her job when she married, because her husband and her mother-in-law did not approve. She confesses her disillusionment on the first night of her honeymoon. "My mother explained what a woman should expect on the first night, but did not tell me about the deep hurt in the soul that she has to undergo. He was just like a hungry tiger, which spotted a deer. Our mothers have created for us the illusions of marriage only for the sake of futile nights." (13) Through the experience of her own pregnancy, Jong-ae comes to a realization about her stereotypical role in the home: "The in-laws are making a fuss, and demand a son in round about ways . . . The reason for my existence is like fulfilling the role of a cow. No more expectation for self-fulfillment."

(14) On top of this, this wife also finds out about her husband's infidelity and voices a strong detestation about the marriage institution.

On the other hand, Su-in, the single career woman, has a relationship with a married man and becomes pregnant. But Su-in realizes that he in irresponsible, feels used and undergoes an abortion. Only Jong-ae accompanies Su-in to the hospital and takes care of her. Jong-ae and Su-in here show a certain bond of sisterhood, after being totally disillusioned by men. They even discuss lesbianism.

Su-in: Have you thought about lesbianism?
Jong-ae: Lesbians?
Su-in: Yes. Somewhere I read that two women deeply immersed in women studies decided that they will become lesbians and went to an inn together, with such a determination as if expecting the first night.
Jong-ae: Then?
Su-in: They tried everything to become lesbian. They took their clothes off one by one, trying to create the mood as if you were having dates with men. And at last just as they were reading each other's faces on the verge of attempting the serious act, suddenly one burst out laughing, and the other followed, losing control.
Jong-ae: So what happened?

Su-in: They married and lived happily.
Jong-ae: With women?
Su-in: No, with men. (8)

This dialogue shows that these women are looking for an alternative form of marriage about which they have heard, but as yet a homosexual relationship is beyond their socialization and comprehension. In the end, the two women confirm each other's emotional support, and Jong-ae implies that she will walk out of her marriage.

The one-woman play titled *The 30 Ways to Kill a Husband* (1996) by So Mi-ae, another younger generation woman playwright, deals with the issue of spousal abuse. Miyon, a middle-class housewife, begins her story by saying that she exists only in the way of her dominated and abused body. She is undergoing identity crisis due to her long subjection to battery by her husband. She confesses how the beating has degraded her to slavery.

At his word, I have to stand up. I have to follow his order and attend on him in his bed. He dashes at me without any feeling, like an animal. And we have loveless sex. No, rape. Swallowing insufferable insult, I am raped. And I cry along with his snoring . . . and I wish to kill my husband by a method as cruel as it possibly can. (5)

This battered wife creates a world of illusion to escape from the pains of such an existence, in which she devises thirty possible ways to kill her husband. In an episodic scene, she carries out the homicide of her husband. But soon the story line is arranged in such a way as to frame this homicide scene as a play within a play by way of the psycho-drama she was participating in. This kind of made-up device reminds us of a similar strategy by Park Hyon-suk in her play *Masquerade*, in which she reverses the plot line into a comedy, thereby lessening the subversive impact of the wife's revolt against her unfaithful husband.

This wife's story ends as her husband is suddenly and mysteriously killed. The ending seems to be rather contrived, but probably because the playwright herself could not see any other alternative to liberate this young battered wife from confinement, without facing possible negative reactions from the patriarchal society in which she lives.

In conclusion, women's dramas in the mid-1990s by the younger generation of women playwrights voiced their strong discontent and questioning regarding the patriarchal institution of marriage, and traditional sex role stereotypes. Unlike their predecessors, who could only imply their discontent with unfaithful husbands in round-about ways in their plays, in their plays these younger women playwrights show candidness and audacity in articulating their antipathy and even hostility toward unfaithful, dominating and abusive husbands as well as the system of marriage itself.

However, both generations of women playwrights share a commonality in that their ultimate concern lies mainly
in improving the husband and wife relationship within marriage in the absence of the alternative entities on their immediate horizons. So far women’s pursuit of independence beyond the boundary of marriage and family is not projected in any one play. This indicates that the Korean form of feminism has established itself on a firm foundation of the patriarchal family values, and women’s dramas as a cultural representation reflect such tendencies. When and how it will develop feminist family politics, which are radically different from the Confucian-based ones engulfing Korean women, remains to be seen.

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Pre-Conference Tour Sights/Sites
Learn more about the Asian communities in the Cleveland area.
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Details on page 6.
The Fulbright scholar program offers a variety of rich resources to the faculty of liberal arts colleges and to the institutions themselves. Awards are offered in all of the countries of East, South, and Southeast Asia for individual faculty to lecture, conduct research, or for a combination of lecturing and research. A common misunderstanding about the program is that the grants are primarily for area specialists. You do not have to be an Asian specialist to compete. In fact, the majority of the awards in Asia are in the core disciplines of the social sciences and humanities and are for teaching.

INDIVIDUAL GRANTS

Contrary to a fairly widespread belief, Fulbright scholar grantees come from all types of institutions. The wide variety of institutions from which grantees come can be easily seen from a review of the institutional list in the CIES annual reports. The list for any given year shows that faculty at liberal arts colleges can and do compete successfully for Fulbright awards to teach, to conduct research, or to do a combination of the two. To cite just a very few examples from various parts of the country, three Allegheny College faculty received 1999/00 awards and another received a 1997/98 award. Faculty members at Albion College received grants in 1995/96 and 1996/97 and two Calvin College faculty members received grants in 1998/99. Six faculty members at Lewis and Clark College received grants between 1994/95 and 1999/00.

CIES review committees and selection committees abroad are interested in applicants’ professional accomplishments and the quality of their proposals, not their home institutions.

Research—Despite the heavier teaching loads that are common at many liberal arts colleges, many faculty still find time to do research and publish. If you have a record of research and publication, you can compete for a Fulbright scholar research award. Research awards of varying lengths are offered in all fields of the social sciences and humanities in Japan, Korea, China, Taiwan, Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam, the Philippines, India and Pakistan. The South Asia Regional Research Program provides the opportunity for a multi-country research project.

Lecturing—Since the quality of teaching skills is heavily emphasized in reviewing applicants for lecturing awards and since liberal arts colleges stress good teaching, their faculty members are often at an advantage in competing for lecturing awards. The one caution is to make certain that the award is not solely for graduate level teaching unless you have had such experience. While there are relatively few opportunities for teaching Asian Studies, there are numerous teaching grants in the various disciplines of the social sciences and humanities. If you are not an area specialist, a Fulbright scholar lecturing grant is a good way to deepen your knowledge of and experience in Asian countries.

Lecturing and Research—Some countries provide the opportunity for combining teaching and research in about an 80/20 ratio. You may be able to teach courses in your discipline and do your research at the same time.

INSTITUTIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

There are also several Fulbright scholar programs designed to assist U.S. institutions in providing more international content in their curriculum.

Scholar-in-Residence Program—These grants enable a U.S. institution to invite a scholar in the social sciences and humanities from abroad to teach on their campus for one semester or an academic year. It is not necessary to identify a specific scholar to be competitive. While host institutions have to provide tangible evidence of support such as a stipend supplement, campus housing, etc., the Fulbright program provides a monthly maintenance allowance based upon cost of living in the host city, round trip travel for the grantee and one dependent, and a professional allowance. We would like to see more ASIANetwork schools avail themselves of these grants.

In the last five competitions, only eight institutions in ASIANetwork have received Scholar-in-Residence grants to bring scholars from East, South, and Southeast Asia to their campuses. The following institutions have been recipients: Bard College (Indonesia, 1996/97), Chatham College (Japan, 1997/98; India, 1999-00), Clark University (Vietnam, 1996/97), College of Notre Dame of Maryland (Australia,1997/98), College of the Holy Cross (Indonesia, 1996/97), Elon College (Australia, 1999/00), Lewis and Clark College (Peoples’ Republic of China, 1998/99), McKendree College (Japan, 1998/99).

Occasional Lecturer Program—This program enables institutions to invite a foreign Fulbright scholar currently in the U.S. whose expertise is of interest to come and make some presentations on campus. The Fulbright program will pay the travel costs from the scholar’s host city to your city. You pick up the local costs. Information about the scholars who are in the United States can be found in the Visiting Scholar Directory published each fall. The Directory is also available on the CIES website. Even though this program is intended particularly to assist smaller institutions in enriching their international offerings, over the last two years only twelve ASIANetwork members have availed themselves of
this resource. We strongly encourage more ASIANetwork institutions to take advantage of these opportunities.

For more information, please visit the CIES website: www.cies.org or contact the following CIES staff members: David Adams (202-686-4021, dadams@cies.iie.org) and Jean McPeek (202-686-4024, jmcpeek@cies.iie.org) regarding opportunities for Americans in East and Southeast Asia and Gary Garrison (202-686-4019, ggarrison@cies.iie.org) regarding opportunities for Americans in South Asia. Christine Djondo (202-686-4004, cdjondo@cies.iie.org) or her assistant Christopher Emanuel (202-686-6235, cemanuel@cies.iie.org) will be happy to provide information about the Scholar-in-Residence and Occasional Lecturer programs.

Due to space constraints, Chuck Hayford and Dan Meissner’s presentations on The Dangers and Pleasures of Teaching Orientalist Classic Books, which were to be included in this issue of the ASIANetwork Exchange, will be published in the Spring issue.
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