

Future Directions in Southeast Asian Studies: Meetings and Conversations

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Background

In 2011, the Henry Luce Foundation (HLF) commissioned a review of grantmaking focused on Southeast Asia as one component of a periodic assessment of its Asia Program. Three reports were completed under the Asia review, including “Review of the Southeast Asia Grants Program,” by consultant Mary S. Zurbuchen (December 2011). Zurbuchen’s review found that HLF support for Southeast Asian Studies over more than two decades had been successful in strengthening Southeast Asian Studies in the United States, and had engaged a broad range of academic and other actors in building a core infrastructure for degree programs, language training and research in the field.

The review also argued that significant changes involving globalization, the digital revolution and demographics have opened new understandings of the area studies enterprise in the academy, with corresponding impacts on access to information, mobility and topical interests of those working in Southeast Asian Studies (SEAS). Along with such changes have come major challenges such as declining resources at federal and state levels, generational transitions, and debates over the validity and directions of international and area studies.

The review offered a set of key recommendations to HLF regarding core areas for strengthening and advancing SEAS, building on the Foundation’s history of support and its record of strategic grantmaking. The recommendations focused on *ensuring support for languages, enhancing resources for student engagement, expanding conversations with the region* through networking and collaboration, and finally, *enlarging the base* of academic constituencies drawing upon Southeast Asia resources and expertise on U.S. campuses.

An important factor underlying the SEAS review process has been continuing uncertainty regarding funding for international studies from the U.S. Department of Education (DOE) and the State Department. Severe reductions in Title VI and Fulbright-Hays programs in 2011-12 have had serious impacts on the sustainability of SEAS programs on campuses with National Resource Centers (NRCs). One theme of the Zurbuchen report and subsequent discussions, accordingly, was the challenge to think about area studies in a “post Title VI” environment in which federal area studies funding levels would remain at current levels or be further reduced.

In charting a course for future Southeast Asia grantmaking in the changing context of this very diverse field, in March 2012¹ HLF Asia Director Helena Kolenda used the occasion of the Association for Asian Studies meetings in Toronto to invite a cross-section of academics—based at NRCs and elsewhere—for a preliminary conversation. Using the framework proposed in the Zurbuchen report, Kolenda asked the group to respond to suggest possible opportunities and directions for the future. A slightly revised version of Zurbuchen’s report was subsequently circulated among the group.

In following months, with the coordination of Justin McDaniel of the University of Pennsylvania, a series of conference calls² connected the group, and a set of themes and sub-groups³ were identified. Each sub-group submitted a report of its own discussions. These conversations would culminate, it was decided, in a meeting of all participants during the Association for Asian Studies Annual Meetings in March 2013.

This report traces the record of these conversations, interim sub-group reports, and the meeting convened by AAS (using a small grant provided by HLF) at the Manchester Hyatt Hotel in San Diego on March 20, 2013. In synthesizing meeting discussions, I have kept in mind the overall goals of this consultative process, as follows:

- Enabling leading actors to share ideas and concerns;
- Clarifying major issues in the SEAS field;
- Defining potential activities that could be carried out at various levels of support;
- Building consensus among a range of leading actors;
- Linking issue clarification process to possible action steps for further consideration by HLF.

Before San Diego: Outline of Sub-Group Discussions

An important part of the consultations leading up to the San Diego meeting were the deliberations of the five sub-groups charged with addressing specific themes under the broad purview of Southeast Asian Studies. Over the fall and winter months of 2012-13, groups exchanged ideas and each submitted a written report to Justin McDaniel on its discussions. Brief summaries of these reports, supplemented by notes from conference calls, are provided below.

¹ During an informal lunch discussion in Toronto during the 2012 AAS meetings.

² Conference calls of the larger group took place in September 2012 and February 2013. Sub-groups carried out their own exchanges in the period between the two group calls.

³ See Appendix A for list of thematic groups and their members.

(1) *Sub-group on Student Support and Training*

This group was charged with assessing **funding, teaching and research conditions for students at undergraduate, graduate and post-graduate levels**. Katherine Bowie's report lists 8 major recommendations, including funding for students to attend the Southeast Asian Studies Summer Institute (SEASSI), as well as to undertake advanced language study in the region; support for pre-dissertation research in SEA; support for study-abroad programs, including better mapping of overseas programs currently operated through U.S. universities; funding for undergraduate internships in SEA countries; and, small research grants, workshops on dissertation-writing, and training in academic publishing for post-doctoral level scholars.

(2) *Sub-group on Language*

One of the key underpinnings of the SEAS field is language training and teaching, an area widely considered to be threatened by local and federal funding cuts. Laurie Sears' report captured the wide-ranging debates of this group, which looked at the recommendations of the Zurbuchen review against the varied institutional realities on their campuses. The group considered aspects of academic year language teaching, the future of SEASSI, and the role of specialized language programs in the region (AST, VASI, COTI, ASK, AFA, etc.), which are also facing sustainability challenges. Participants also debated the potential of distance learning (DL) and implications of new technologies for SEA language teaching.

While the group did not settle on one set of recommendations, members largely supported **strengthening of SEASSI as a core national resource** for area studies, and some endorsed further exploration of ideas (such as endowment funding) that could sustain academic year instruction. The group felt that **language programs in SEA should be continued**, especially for advanced level training. The group also urged HLF to consider multiple funding options in the language arena, recognizing that "each university and NRC program has different strengths and weaknesses."

(3) *Sub-group on Institutional Linkages*

The mandate of this group involved thinking about prospective networks or programs that could stimulate engagement, develop new audiences, and enable fruitful collaborations within, between and beyond U.S. campuses. In Meredith Weiss's report, the group posed questions about how best to attract students, non-specialist professionals and others into the sphere of SEAS.

The working group identified **a lack of centralized information resources on SEAS** as a constraint. Recommendations included efforts to map, or to provide an internet-based hub for, information on existing academic degree programs, community based outreach and school engagement, language training, NRC and other SEAS centers, and professional networks of Southeast Asianists. Providing in-region training for secondary school educators, starting robust programs of campus-based exchanges for SEAsian and American students or faculty, and promoting internships and voluntarism in SEA were additional suggestions.

(4) *Sub-group on Centers/Facilities/Outreach/Faculty*

This theme refers to core infrastructure and academic components for a strong area studies future. In addition to affirming the centrality of language instruction on campus, the group supported efforts to develop online capacities for SEA language learning, according to Juliane Schober's report. Members felt it important to **build a stronger profile for America's leading SEAS Centers** both domestically and within Asia. Other recommendations included renewed attention to support for area studies-related faculty hires, especially in social sciences; support for pre-tenure research and publishing were also seen as critical. The group encouraged **attention to emerging opportunities for engagement and research** in the field such as the opening of Myanmar/Burma, with its important implications for American scholarship as well as foreign policy.

(5) *Sub-group on Libraries*

Against the backdrop of HLF's history of support for university research collections in SEAS, this group noted **a series of funding reductions** in the Department of Education's budget **now impacting the major SEA libraries in the U.S.** Judith Henchy's report outlines a number of issues of importance to the institutional members of CORMOSEA, including acquisition of contemporary printed and digital materials (including capture of born-digital resources); new and emerging copyright issues in acquisition and teaching; challenges and possible new formats for collecting newspapers and journals; and, the changing roles of libraries and librarians in the new information environment.

In addition, the library sub-group considered issues such as building media/film collections, collaborations with institutions in the region, development of digital library hubs, and working with organizations to increase open access to published works through capture of PDF documents from the region.

The San Diego Meeting

Participants⁴ in the March 20, 2013 meeting in San Diego gathered for five hours around an agenda that aimed to recap the work of the various sub-groups and, more importantly, to move beyond these separate topics to **synthesize an overall statement of the most promising future directions for SEAS**. While participants were mindful that funding realities and academic trends present sobering challenges to area studies in the U.S., it was encouraging to many that HLF had embarked on its SEA Program Review at this time, providing an opportunity and a platform for renewed engagement, consultations, and inter-institutional consensus about the future of Southeast Asian Studies.

In her opening remarks, Helena Kolenda noted how Southeast Asianists had gathered periodically since 1990 to assess both concerns and possibilities for their field. HLF has partnered with other foundations to support dialogues on "weighing

⁴ See Appendix B for a list of meeting participants.

the balance,” reflections on “crossing borders,” and other conversations. At this time, she encouraged meeting participants to be creative in imagining activities and collaborations that could strengthen the field at various funding levels, or even without external resources. Our San Diego meeting, she suggested, would be framed both by the limitations of the resource environment (for public sector as well as private donors) as well as the dynamism and evolution in area studies noted in Zurbuchen’s report.

Echoing this sense of potential opportunity, Justin McDaniel asked participants to share a recent event or accomplishment in their area of work, to get a sense of the “good news” in the SEAS field. Going around the table, George Dutton noted that SEA language enrollments were holding steady at UCLA, while Jeff Hadler was encouraged that UC Berkeley’s incoming Chancellor (Nick Dirks) is an area studies specialist, and that three recent PhDs in SEA History have all found tenure track appointments. Mariam Lam reported on UC Riverside’s steady stream of appointments in SEAS, including history, literature, anthropology and ethnic studies.

Continuing this discussion, Tamara Loos noted that SEA faculty at Cornell University led the effort to establish the new American Institute for Indonesian Studies with support from the State Department and HLF. University of Washington’s Laurie Sears recently served as Visiting Professor in Brunei, creating a curriculum in SEAS for ASEAN officials and diplomats. Representing Arizona State, Juliane Schober participated in an academic delegation to Burma that suggested many collaborative possibilities, while at University of Michigan the pace of international studies programming on campus has accelerated, according to Allan Hicken. Kevin Hewison pointed out that a recent academic audit at University of North Carolina/Chapel Hill identified 19 faculty working on SEA, and a growing number of courses related to the region. At Northern Illinois, Judy Ledgerwood cited successful retention of the faculty line for Burmese language and literature following a retirement. NIU recently held conferences for Khmer Studies and Burmese Studies, while at University of Wisconsin, said Mary Jo Wilson, more than 200 people are registered for an upcoming Lao Studies conference.

Katherine Bowie, also from Madison, pointed to heightened advocacy for international studies and better communication among all the Title VI centers on campus. Barbara Gaerlan shared news that University of California will re-open a study abroad program in Indonesia, and Juliana Wijaya announced that this year COTI was successful in its Group Projects Abroad (GPA) application for the summer Indonesian language program under Fulbright Hays funding. Sarah Weiss reported that Yale has acquired a Javanese *gamelan* ensemble, and that Indonesian language enrollments are booming on campus. At University of Hawaii, meanwhile, Southeast Asia faculty appointments total 55, according to Stephen O’Harrow, while all 6 language positions are tenure track. Finally, AAS’s Robert Snow described the Association’s initiative to hold a series of conferences in Asia, starting off in Singapore in partnership with the Asia Research Institute during 2014.

The next session in San Diego featured a rapid review of the five sub-group reports described above. Summaries of key findings and recommendations were provided by the spokespersons for each group. Participants were then asked to break into small groups for one hour, **mixing members of the original sub-groups**, and building on the sub-group thematic reports. The goal was to direct our conversations toward a more general synthesis of perspectives and priority issues for the field as a whole. Following dinner, breakout groups presented their reports to the plenary session. Lists of breakout group members are as follows:

Breakout Group 1

Chhany Sak-Humphry, Jeffrey Hadler, Jeffrey Shane, Allen Hicken, Helena Kolenda

Breakout Group 2

George Dutton, Mary Jo Wilson, Judith Henchy, Tamara Loos, Mary Zurbuchen

Breakout Group 3

Robert Snow, Juliane Schober, Judy Ledgerwood, Laurie Sears

Breakout Group 4

Katherine Bowie, Christine Su, Barbara Gaerlan, Mariam Lam, Li Ling

Breakout Group 5

Tuong Vu, Stephen O'Harrow, Sarah Weiss, Justin McDaniel

Emerging Themes

Instead of attempting to record all comments and suggestions from each group, what follows here is a record of major themes, recommendations and questions that were reported coming out of the breakout sessions.⁵ Groups appeared to spend at least part of their time “down in the weeds,” comparing specific institutional contexts and experiences; nonetheless, they all in some measure addressed the mandate to chart overarching issues that could be addressed through specific responses. I have tried to amalgamate the group presentations into broad categories; once this report is circulated among participants, there will be opportunity to add to or correct the summaries offered below.

All of the breakout groups in one way or another pointed to the **critical importance of training in Southeast Asian languages**. Several groups suggested that further research be done on new technologies; for example, to what extent

⁵ This summary is based on flipchart notes taken by Mary Zurbuchen and Helena Kolenda concurrent with the discussions, as well as subsequent notes and comments provided by Robert Snow, Li Ling, and Juliana Wijaya. A record of flipchart notes is given in Appendix C.

could Distance Learning (DL) technologies be applied to expand the pool of students for less commonly taught languages? Should some campuses specialize in training in specific languages? One group strongly recommended supporting permanent language teaching positions through an endowment-building program. There does seem to be an emerging consensus that especially at beginning and intermediate levels of instruction domestic training in the major languages must be sustained, and that sending students abroad to study at these levels is not a substitute.

In the realm of pedagogy, there is need to continue professionalization of instructors and definition of standards and competencies in the major SEA languages. Almost every group endorsed **sustaining SEASSI as a key resource for the field**, and felt that continued funding for undergraduates, graduates, and students from non-NRC schools must be prioritized. Some thought that SEASSI's unique niche vis-à-vis academic year or overseas learning opportunities needs to be more sharply articulated. Another recommendation was for more explicit linking of training efforts such that academic year language instruction, SEASSI, and advanced training overseas could be better coordinated to the benefit of students.

A second major theme concerns the **libraries and specialized research collections** that underpin all area studies enterprise. HLF—along with other donors, the Library of Congress, and SEA librarians—has helped build priceless collections in major U.S. universities. These resources are at risk not only because of steady funding cuts, but also due to unprecedented **changes in information technology, use of multimedia platforms, the emergence of internet publishing and digitization**. All these factors point to the need for new cooperation beyond U.S. borders. Breakout groups suggested that while CORMOSEA members are already discussing collaboration and enhanced specialization among U.S. institutions, there need to be processes and resources directed toward international acquisitions, copyright issues, and agreements with key institutions in SEA so that U.S. libraries maintain robust collections of contemporary and born-digital materials. One specific priority cited is **adoption of effective consortial arrangements** (domestically and across borders), possibly including new kinds of “borrow direct” systems between universities.

Breakout members also felt that SEAS in the U.S. needs to move beyond our borders to **nurture international linkages**. Centers could seek collaborations with SEAS programs in Kyoto, Singapore and Canberra, for instance. The Association for Asian Studies is currently deepening ties with other professional membership associations such as ICAS or EuroSEAS. The move toward “decentering” SEAS from the dominant U.S. model emphasizing NRCs might open space for new partnerships for exchange of students and scholars, joint research, and internship or service learning opportunities for U.S. students. Audiences for SEAS exist beyond academic specialists and include journalists, policymakers, and activists in the region. The **ASEAN 2015** unification theme presents special openings for promoting teaching and exchanges on transnational issues and research topics.

Related to international linkages is the topic of enhanced **networking among NRCs and other SEAS programs**, both domestic and international. Participants raised the possibility of building a well-managed website for centralizing information on U.S. programs. Some noted that **mapping strengths and resources across the field** would raise the profile of SEAS for the general public both in the US and abroad. More people need to be aware of the resources available in the U.S. model, namely, the set of leading area studies centers represented by Title VI, one group noted. Networking more closely could help Centers find ways to stretch available funds, another group pointed out.

Discussion of networking potentials leads directly to consideration of **the role of emerging technologies in area studies**, with the implications cited above for library acquisition of born-digital materials, say, or new approaches to DL for languages. Internet-based initiatives in teaching for K-12 levels are an obvious niche for SEAS outreach and curriculum development. Summer programs for educators can be linked to tools such as multimedia products or podcasts for classroom use.

Applying new technologies opens possibilities of **new audiences for SEAS**, several groups suggested. Other groups posed questions: How do we represent ourselves, and to which audiences? What is our proper sphere of action? How do we attract new students? A recommendation was tabled to **emphasize raising the profile of SEAS** (beyond individual countries) **as an intellectual field**, on campuses, in the region itself, and among alumni, donors and the general public. One group stressed the importance of experiential learning (such as through the Peace Corps) in bringing people to area studies and graduate student careers; to that end, we should focus on developing service learning, community-based research, internships and other opportunities in the region.

An additional theme breakout groups highlighted was the **need to diversify funding sources** to strengthen SEAS for the future. Recommendations included promoting U.S. programs through university alumni associations abroad; cultivating better understanding of area studies priorities among campus development officers and major university donors; using digital platforms for marketing language courses and other products; and, working with regional institutions on a co-funding basis. A special note was added to this discussion by Ms. Arjaree Sriratanaban, Minister-Counselor from the Royal Thai Embassy in Washington, DC, who attended the meeting as an observer, and whose embassy has been collaborating with a number of Thai studies programs in the U.S. in recent years.

Following the breakout discussions, the closing plenary session in San Diego built on major points raised by the breakout groups. Attention was drawn to the ways some programs (such as University of Pennsylvania's orientation to SEA for students in the Global Nursing program) are **linking area studies to professional school curricula**. An effective approach for drawing students into further academic

work is **short-term engagement** with the region through internships or service learning. In addition, there was a sense that the traditional “study abroad” model needs revision or broadening. Participants recognized that area studies needs to be regarded as a **continuum of exposure and learning**, from short-term contact to in-depth study of language and culture, and that Centers should be ready to address needs of various constituencies along this continuum.

Across the spectrum of priorities for strengthening SEAS, we were reminded that there is **no single solution to fit all institutions**; a myriad of administrative, academic and financial realities impinge on every Center and affect collaborative efforts. At the same time, a moment of strategic clarification occurred toward the end of the meeting when incoming AAS President Thongchai Winichakul was asked to share his impressions, and observed, “I believe that in the future, we will survive only by resource sharing and thinking creatively.”

By the end of the evening, a sense had emerged that all these conversations clarified three issue clusters: **Language, Libraries and Linkages**. The **Language** rubric covers issues of the evolution of different learning environments, SEASSI’s future, sustaining instructional positions on campuses, and how to expand application of new technologies and DL approaches. Under **Libraries** are grouped a host of challenges around acquisitions, resources for scholarship, new information technologies and publishing platforms, development of teaching tools, and new possibilities for consortial arrangements. The **Linkages** theme addresses enhanced cooperation between NRCs and other programs in the U.S.; networking and direct engagement with SEAS programs abroad; ideas about how students can experience the region; and, how SEAsianists can define and reach new constituencies and audiences. Not everyone would characterize these general rubrics in the same way, but to many of us they offered a sensible amalgamation of the major themes under discussion.

Perspectives from the Broader Field

The meeting in San Diego (including preparatory discussions) was successful in generating significant consensus around major issues and dynamics in the field of Southeast Asian Studies, while still acknowledging the widely varied contexts prevailing on U.S. campuses. It is important to note here some additional interactions around international and area studies currently taking place in the U.S. and beyond, especially in considering the kinds of innovations, collaborations and linkages that U.S.-based actors might pursue in future.

Starting with discussions at home, the entire area studies field has been on alert since 2011 as a result of significant federal government budget reductions and funding uncertainties going forward. In response, in 2012 HLF brought together one group of area and international studies funders and professional bodies to share

information and funding strategies.⁶ In November 2012 Mellon Foundation hosted a discussion with eight major research universities to which it had made grants⁷ to address funding gaps brought about by the Title VI cuts. That meeting involved senior administrators at provost or dean level, and prioritized questions about disciplinary issues, institutional problems, funding pressures, and possible strategies for Mellon, given its historical role as a major humanities funder. A subsequent meeting under Mellon auspices held at Duke University in December 2012 brought together people from major research libraries to consider a set of issues related to the changing context for international scholarship.⁸

More recently, the Association for Asian Studies is considering two proposals for its March 2014 annual meetings focused around issues important to SEAS and area studies generally. One proposal would convene a roundtable on "The impact of Title VI cuts on Asian Studies in higher education: Strategies to maintain US capacity to engage with Asia." A second panel proposal comes from members of COTSEAL (Consortium of Teachers of Southeast Asian Languages) and would highlight the impacts of summer advanced language programs abroad and argue for the importance of maintaining these training opportunities in Southeast Asian languages that have nearly all lost funding from the Fulbright-Hays GPA (Group Projects Abroad) program.⁹

The Coalition for International Education has also formulated a plan for convening area studies NRCs and others to assess the status of government funding under DOE/Title VI. Scheduled for April 2014, the meeting will be hosted by the College of William and Mary; the Coalition's consultant, Mariam Kazanjian, is currently in discussion with HLF regarding a grant proposal to help support this initiative. Another relevant activity currently in the planning stage is the inaugural "AAS-in-Asia" conference organized in conjunction with the Asia Research Institute and the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences of the National University of Singapore. Envisioned as the first of a series of conferences located within the region, the theme of the July 2014 Singapore gathering is "Asia in Motion: Heritage and Transformation," with a focus on "emerging visions and trends in Asian studies within Asia." The conference will bring together scholars and academics from around the region, and with its location in Singapore should provide opportunities for highlighting Southeast Asian Studies in particular.

⁶ This informal gathering took place at the HLF offices on September 12, 2012, and included representatives from Mellon, Carnegie and Luce foundations as well as SSRC and ACLS.

⁷ Grants were made to eight major research universities at the level of \$750,000 for a three-year period.

⁸ A detailed report on that meeting, titled "The Global Dimensions of Scholarship and Research Libraries: Finding Synergies, Creating Convergence," argues for concerted collaborative efforts to respond to shifts toward "digital modalities of creation and use."

⁹ Only COTI, the Indonesian language GPA, received funding in FY 2013.

During preparation of this report I was able to participate in two other meetings in which different groups of actors in the SEAS field assessed the current status of their work and discussed priorities for the future. The first was the COTSEAL annual meeting, which generally occurs during the AAS conference and this year took place in San Diego.¹⁰ An important and urgent topic for the educators and linguists of COTSEAL was the struggle many are experiencing in maintaining the summer training courses in advanced Southeast Asian languages. Members also looked at the status of SEASSI in terms of the numbers of students enrolling and the reduction in FLAS funds available from NRC campuses in the SEASSI consortium.

At the request of HLF and while in Asia on other business, I also participated in part of the ICAS (International Convention of Asia Scholars) biennial conference held in Macau; the conference was a joint project of the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) and the University of Macau. At the invitation of IIAS Director Philippe Peycam, who is based in Leiden, I sat in on a special roundtable titled “Southeast Asian Studies: Crisis or Opportunity?” where scholars from Japan, South Korea, Thailand and Singapore offered comments on the state of the field. This was followed by lively discussion among a broad audience including academics from the U.S., Australia and the United Kingdom, which revealed that different kinds of constraints and opportunities characterize the status of the field at present.¹¹

Reflections

The convenings outlined above all represent important threads in a larger conversation regarding the future of international studies, a conversation taking place in the U.S. against the background of economic downturn and lack of clear policy direction from Washington. On the one hand, a prevailing focus on national security in the global arena appears to be skewing Washington’s funding priorities toward intelligence and defense and away from broader knowledge building through established centers of excellence. On the other, current debates within the higher education field questioning the “relevance” of the humanities and liberal arts while promoting an orientation toward “market-demand” disciplines and STEM fields threatens to diminish the perceived value of area studies, with its foundation in language and the humanities. The DOE appears to seek to inject international studies into underserved institutions and communities, which on its face is a positive stance, as long as the established centers of excellence are not overlooked. In addition, a growing movement promoting inclusive, cost-effective learning environments means that new virtual formats (such as MOOCs) and efficiencies of scale could become new measures of educational efficacy---to the disadvantage of undergraduate area studies degree programs, say, or less commonly taught languages (Southeast Asia does not have “more commonly taught” varieties) which never will rival Chinese or Spanish in their enrollment numbers.

¹⁰ Appendix D gives a list of the COTSEAL members present at their San Diego meeting.

¹¹ See Appendix E for a fuller report on the ICAS roundtable discussions.

In the earlier report on Southeast Asian Studies grantmaking, I noted that cross-border topics; the global optic for analyzing “area” issues; and internal debates over the place of international studies within the academy, are contrasting perspectives influencing the field today. In addition, new audiences in heritage communities and Asian-American Studies fields are making their presence felt. As HLF considers future priorities for its support to SEAS, these aspects of the larger context suggest that the “traditional” paradigm for area studies (based on Title VI-type funding for selected centers of excellence in humanities disciplines) will no longer be dominant, and will undergo substantial change if it exists at all. Yet such ongoing changes do not necessarily invalidate reasons for reinforcing crucial infrastructure in the field, which has long been a hallmark of HLF grantmaking. HLF has a proven record of effectiveness in response to carefully assessed needs. It should not abandon this approach, but should look for ways to adjust its focus, recalibrate priorities and explore new avenues for applying its resources in the altered landscape.

The scholars and teachers who gathered in San Diego are overwhelmingly positive about HLF’s commitment to continued support for SEAS; they are also mindful of limitations on the Foundation’s resources for new initiatives. After follow-up discussions with staff, I feel confident that HLF is in a position to shape a program initiative that would reflect the conversations described above while remaining in line with probable HLF budget availabilities over the next several years. Further thoughts on such an initiative, along with important questions for further consideration, are outlined below.

“Shared Resources, New Collaborations “

In moving to define future support for Southeast Asian Studies, this theme—shared resources, new collaborations—offers scope both for strengthening core capacities as well as enabling creative responses to new realities. As suggested above, conversations among leading actors culminating in San Diego produced a trio of priority areas, or sub-themes, for HLF funding:

- Language
- Libraries
- Linkages

Each of these areas reflects the aims and concerns of academic practitioners for activities on home campuses, as part of regional and national networks, and in different kinds of international arrangements. In other words, there is both a domestic and international axis of potential action under each area.

The rubric of **Language**, for example, covers the fundamental goal of area studies programs to train students and specialists in the major languages of SEA. In

recent decades U.S. universities have built and expanded multi-level instruction in a growing number of the languages of this diverse region: a field once including mainly Indonesian, Thai and Filipino/Tagalog has now been enriched with robust programs in Vietnamese, Khmer, Burmese and (recently) Lao. Sustaining these programs within the NRC schools is a major challenge that is unlikely to be met through Title VI funding alone, and requires new thinking and program innovation. How will new technology-assisted learning environments be explored? Can language study at home be more effectively linked to training opportunities abroad, and how might this look? How will language programs maintain sufficient numbers of professionally qualified teachers and contribute to the development of curricula, standards and competency measures for LCTLs? SEASSI represents a prime example of a national consortium meeting needs across the SEA language field: can HLF work with the University of Wisconsin to stabilize SEASSI into the future?

In the area of **Libraries**, we are talking about not just valuable tangible collections but also a profoundly altered mediascape that impacts the learning environment in many ways. How is the digital revolution changing ways students learn and access knowledge? How are libraries adapting to these changes in working with faculty and students? Can research libraries serve as effective channels for developing information tools and international education in the public arena? Once again, there are both U.S. and international dimensions involved, as university libraries search for the best arrangements for acquisitions of new publications, born-digital documents, serials and multimedia materials. Issues such as changing copyright policies and collaborative collection agreements can now be worked out together with Southeast Asian institutions. As reduced funding from the Library of Congress makes it imperative for Southeast Asia collections to band together for effective cost sharing, new consortial arrangements in different regions of the U.S. may emerge. Since CORMOSEA is a well-established network, it could be supported to push ahead with the kinds of activities noted above.

The arena for potential **Linkages** is broad, requiring further thought and definition. Looking at efforts by IIAS, AAS and other bodies to pursue more global definitions of Asian Studies, it is important for leading U.S. institutions to be part of expanding international dialogues. One unifying theme fostering connections with SEA is “ASEAN 2015,” which could be a framework for assisting regional universities to develop Southeast Asian Studies curricula; to support relevant research through partnerships of U.S. and regional institutions; or, to establish internships in the region for U.S. students. Also of interest would be new collaborations between SEAS and Asian-American Studies programs; this kind of “transnational” cultural studies perspective has garnered support from HLF at the University of Southern California, for example. Another avenue to explore would be exchanges between U.S. and regional institutions to enable short-term visits by U.S. based students, access to U.S. research collections for Southeast Asian scholars, or visiting faculty opportunities. Programs seeking to integrate SEAS with non-humanities disciplines or professional schools on their campuses would also be

building linkages, as would NRCs linking their SEAS programs to international education at four-year and community colleges.

However the initiative is defined, it would be shaped against the evolving background of forthcoming Title VI and other federal funding decisions. Possible additional conversations with government officers and others in Washington, DC would be part of the exploration process. Once the overall initiative is more clearly defined, HLF could invite universities to submit proposals around the new theme. Given the overall initiative focus on consortia and resource sharing, HLF could stipulate that proposal submissions would include some component of collaboration or co-funding. While NRCs would be expected to be major targets for the initiative, the field should remain inclusive, and enable participation from non-NRC schools as well.

In fashioning major rounds of competition under the initiative, funds from HLF would be defined so as not to displace existing university funding streams. The Foundation could explore ways to work with NRCs to leverage (for example) more permanent university commitments to Centers, language instruction, and departmental faculty lines.

Assuming that there is substantial lead time before launching the initiative, HLF could consider laying the groundwork through selected grant actions. For example, SEASSI could be tasked to develop a five-year work plan building on its experimentations with DL technology. Further discussions focused on how to raise funds for sustainable language instructor positions could be organized with interested NRCs. Given the new AAS-in-Asia conference series kicking off with the Singapore conference in July 2014, HLF could support U.S. programs or graduate students with intriguing “linkage” ideas to attend. The CORMOSEA group of SEA librarians could be assisted to develop its strategic plan.

While the “Language, Libraries and Linkages” rubrics do provide sufficient scope for future action, it will also be important to look at priorities that might be left out. Direct support for graduate students is a widely expressed need, especially at public universities, that does not fit easily into the framework. The emergence of new publications (such as the revived *Journal of the Burma Research Society*) is another example. Once this report has been read and HLF gathers comments from the field, the ideas suggested here can be revisited, revised, and moved toward a future operational stage.

Appendix A: List of Thematic Sub-Groups

(1) Sub-group on Student Support and Training

Katherine Bowie, U. of Wisconsin (spokesperson)
Stephen O'Harrow, U. of Hawaii
Robert Snow, AAS
Karl Jackson, SAIS

(2) Sub-group on Language Training

Laurie Sears, U. of Washington (spokesperson)
Chhany Sak-Humphry, U. of Hawaii
Mary Jo Wilson, U. of Wisconsin
Jeffrey Hadler, UC Berkeley
Barbara Gaerlan, UCLA
Tamara Loos, Cornell

(3) Sub-group on Institutional and Professional Networks Between U.S. and Southeast Asian Bodies and Programs

Sarah Weiss, Yale (spokesperson)
Mariam Lam, UC Riverside
Judy Ledgerwood, Northern Illinois
Tuong Vu, U. of Oregon

(4) Sub-group on Centers, Facility, Outreach and Faculty Growth at Private and Public Institutions

Juliane Schober, Arizona State (spokesperson)
Allen Hicken, U. of Michigan
Christine Su, Ohio U.
Donald Emmerson, Stanford
George Dutton, UCLA

(5) Sub-group on Library and Technology Resources

Judith Henchy, U. of Washington (spokesperson)
Jeffrey Shane, Ohio U.
Justin McDaniel, U. of Pennsylvania

Appendix B: Participants in San Diego Meeting

Justin McDaniel, University of Pennsylvania
Laurie Sears, University of Washington
Judith Henchy, University of Washington
Jeffrey Hadler, University of California, Berkeley
George Dutton, University of California, Los Angeles
Barbara Gaerlan, University of California, Los Angeles
Juliana Wijaya, University of California, Los Angeles
Mariam Lam, University of California, Riverside
Allen Hicken, University of Michigan
Judy Ledgerwood, Northern Illinois University
Juliane Schober, Arizona State University
Christine Su, Ohio University
Jeffrey Shane, Ohio University
Tamara Loos, Cornell University
Kevin Hewison, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
Katherine Bowie, University of Wisconsin
Mary Jo Wilson, University of Wisconsin
Stephen O'Harrow, University of Hawaii, Manoa
Chhany Sak-Humphry, University of Hawaii, Manoa
Sarah Weiss, Yale University
Tuong Vu, University of Oregon

Helena Kolenda, HLF
Li Ling, HLF
Robert Snow, AAS
Mary Zurbuchen, Ford Foundation IFP

Appendix C: Records from San Diego Meeting

Summary of Thematic Group Discussions

1) NETWORKING

- Reaching beyond US a priority
- Training for K-12 teachers
- Cross-fertilizing w/ SEA institutions
- Intra-institutional linkages also important

2) STUDENT TRAINING NEEDS

- Funding for SEASSI, undergrads & grads
- Pre-dissertation funds for fieldwork
- Advanced language training in-country

3) LIBRARIES

- Consortial approaches (including regional) for acquisitions
- Engage in collaborations w/regional libraries
- Acquiring newspapers thru negotiations w/publishers
- PDFs to be captured online
- Working with Hathi Trust materials, release of orphan works
- How to exploit open access; encourage use of own regional repositories

4) CENTERS, FACILITY, OUTREACH

- Foreground Centers as resources/networks
- Engage SEAS in region, reinvigorate networks
- Internationalization, globalization, digitization are arenas for collaboration on campuses and beyond
- Support SEAsianists prior to tenure, esp. in social sciences

5) LANGUAGE TRAINING

- Importance of SEASSI
- SEASSI & overseas programs (GPAs): more coordination and articulation
- Varied strategies for sustainability needed
- Need assessments of distance learning potential

Breakout Group Reports

Group1 [J.Shane, rapporteur]

- Support language positions through endowment mechanisms
- Merits of SEASSI vis-a-vis overseas opportunities: What is unique niche? Student #s from non-NRC schools?
- Systematic efforts on standards, pedagogy
- Campus "specializations" on certain languages?
- Tap into student markets at non-NRC schools
- Adaptability, non-duplication important
- Should SEASSI specialize in languages not taught elsewhere?
- Create distance learning hubs in specific time zones
- Scholarships for lang. study

Group 2 [G. Dutton]

- Language (SEASSI, concentrations on certain campuses, distance learning)
- Link w/private partners offering lang. instruction in region
- Libraries: dedicated regional consortia, look at existing models, e.g. Cascade, Cornell/Columbia
- Issue of specialized collections: who collects what needs to be worked out
- Linkages of our Centers with institutions in the region
- Mapping assets & strengths both within US and in SEA
- Raising profile of US centers within region

Group 3 [J. Schober]

- How to represent ourselves, and to which audiences?
- Need website featuring SEA programs, research, faculty, curricula, etc.
- Audiences: in Asia, also non-specialists, journalists, policymakers, etc.
- Museums, humanities, higher education reforms, TESL = ways to leverage support for centers on campus and in regions
- ASEAN as a unifying theme: can our Centers contribute, take renewed interest in regional unification?
- Faculty replacement needed to keep attracting students
- How to encourage new generation of scholars?

Group 4 [K. Bowie]

- Networking to help stretch funds
- Websites, podcasts for K-12 on SEA subjects, multimedia products = new learning tools
- SEASSI: promote domestic distance learning (using out-of-state tuition scholarships?)
- What is our sphere of action? Undergrad ed, general public, etc. = SEAS for whom?
- Fundraising: how, from whom?
- Develop funding networks in the field using easy digital platforms

Group 5 [J. McDaniel]

- Group stressed "no or few \$\$" options
- Raising SEA profile on campus, in SEA, among alums, donors & public
- Service learning program: experience in SEA (e.g. Peace Corps) drives grad student careers, occurs prior to dissertation
- Internships at SEA centers in Asia, e.g. help with English/editing, contributing special skills
- Focus on SEAS as a field

Appendix D: Participants in COTSEAL Annual Meeting
San Diego, 23 March 2013

Chhany Sak Humphry, University of Hawaii (Khmer)

Juliana Wijaya, UCLA (Indonesian)

Ruth Mabanglo, University of Hawaii (Filipino)

Terry Ramos, University of Hawaii (Filipino)

Mary Jo Wilson, University of Wisconsin/SEASSI

Stephen O'Harrow, University of Hawaii (Vietnamese)

Andrea Pham, University of Florida (GUAVA/Vietnamese)

Thuy Tranviet, Cornell University (Vietnamese)

Bac Tran, UC Berkeley (Vietnamese)

Binh Ngo, Harvard University (Vietnamese)

Vinya Sysamouth, Center for Lao Studies (Lao)

Supeena Insee Adler, UC Riverside (Thai)

Vo Thi Thanh Binh (Vietnamese)

Larry Ashmun, University of Wisconsin (SEA Librarian)

Appendix E: Notes from the ICAS Roundtable
“Southeast Asian Studies: Crisis or Opportunity?”

Macau, 26 June 2013

The roundtable convenor **Mario Ivan Lopez** (Kyoto University) introduced the panel of speakers, and thanked ICAS for enabling this opportunity for exchanges within and beyond the Asia region on what he sees as an increasingly important set of issues. He mentioned current funding cutbacks from government in the U.S. and Europe as motivations for the roundtable, as well as the common lack of comparative perspective on SEAS as practiced in other regions.

Lopez then presented a paper from **Caroline Sy Hau** (Kyoto University) who was unable to be in Macau. Her paper made the argument that SEAS is growing from within the region itself, and that the strongest impetus for this growth will continue to come from political and economic relations among actors within Asia. She also reflected on the inherent “heterogeneity” of Southeast Asia as a theme with particular intellectual value.

The second presentation came from **Philippe Peycam** of IIAS, who took a global perspective on current transformations in knowledge production impacting SEAS. He noted the “problematique” of area studies debates over the past two decades, and suggested that we need to think beyond a normative academic framework (one that emphasizes training a new scholarly generation for universities) to uncover a new dynamism for the field. Peycam challenged the audience to look for ways to catalyze younger scholarship moving in unconventional directions, and stressed that scholarship must reject “exclusivism” in favor of partnerships on an equal basis. He is troubled by difficulties in gaining admission for young Cambodian scholars to leading regional centers such as NUS, for example, maintaining that it was often easier for such scholars to be accepted in U.S. or European programs.

Speaking as a faculty representative of National University of Singapore, **Michael Feener** (formerly of UC Riverside) said that NUS has been building a SEAS program for half a century. The emergence of the Asia Research Institute (ARI) in the last 12 years has been especially notable; this year ARI is hosting researchers from 24 countries, and is a prominent crossroads for scholars and professionals in many fields. Feener sees Singapore contributing to the vitality of SEAS by providing resources and a location encouraging the study of diverse issues in an Asian context. Interactions are cross-sectoral and involve emerging actors from the “global south” as well as long-established western institutions.

Looking at local constraints, Feener also cited a need for continual justification of social sciences and humanities in Singapore, areas of knowledge that have traditionally been underdeveloped. He also noted that ARI is a post-doctoral institution; in the university’s own postgraduate SEAS programs, few outstanding Ph.D. scholars have emerged, which Feener attributed in part to the limited language training and fieldwork time typical of degree programs at NUS. However,

NUS is starting up a comparative Asian Studies Ph.D. program that may draw larger numbers of students into the field.

The next presenter was **Sang Kook Lee** from Sogang University, who explained that Korean approaches to area studies emerged in the 1980s during South Korea's reform era, when scholarship on regionalization and globalization became important. Initially developed through research in comparative political science and international relations, SEAS in recent years has embraced fields such as sociology, anthropology and economics. The Korean Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (KISEAS) was established in 1991, and brings out a journal. The past decade has been a productive period of research, though according to Lee, much Korean research on SEA is weak on theory, and needs more of a transnational focus. Korean scholarship on SEA is overwhelmingly published in Korean.

Speaking from the perspective of Thailand was **Charnvit Kasetsiri**, a professor of history at Thammasat University long active in developing area studies. Charnvit began by citing Oliver Wolters' dictum that area scholarship for Southeast Asians is a source of self-awareness, and noted that there seems to be a new call for urgent attention to SEAS every few years. He pointed to the establishment of SEASREP in 1994 as an important juncture for area studies scholars in the region; SEASREP is continuing activities even though the once-prominent support from Japanese institutions has waned. Since 2000 academic programs in area studies have flourished in Thailand, and there are at least 5 programs at the masters level at the major universities (Chulalongkorn, Chiang Mai, Thammasat and Naresuan). Thammasat itself offers a BA in Southeast Asian Studies, which currently enrolls 100 students and requires study of a second SEA language. It also offers an international MA in SEAS, an MA through its ASEAN Center, as well as a doctoral degree in SEAS. Chulalongkorn enrolls 10-20 students per year in its international Southeast Asian Studies MA program, which is taught in English.

Recently there has been a trend away from "Asian" and toward "ASEAN" studies, Charnvit said, pointing to the appearance of several new BA programs in ASEAN Studies. He attributes this trend in part to the active role played by former ASEAN Secretary-General Surin Pitsuwan, who promoted the importance of the regional body in Thailand. ASEAN can also be seen as a "new brand" for private universities to market as tertiary education expands and fees for "popular" degree programs rise. Charnvit worries about commercialization of higher education in Thailand, and noted that there are too few core staff and publications in the SEAS field.

The final presenter, **Yoko Hayami** of Center for Southeast Asian Studies at Kyoto University, began by noting growing interest in SEAS in Japan throughout the period when western scholarship was avidly "deconstructing" the area studies concept. The government has supported overseas research since the 1960s; Kyoto's CSEAS was launched in 1963, and the Japan Society for SEAsian History was created in 1966. In contrast to the theory-driven, discipline based area studies scholarship in U.S. universities, area studies in Japan was institutionalized without being based

in disciplinary departments. Hayami noted continuing debates around Japan's perspectives on and relations with the SEAsian region. Interestingly, Hayami also explained that the university system in Japan is undergoing reorganization, leading to new demands that CSEAS Kyoto justify the significant resources it is accustomed to receiving from government. One argument being presented says that according to IMF estimates, by 2018 Japan's trade with ASEAN will represent 67% of the national economy; what impacts will this have on academic needs and priorities?

General discussion following the presentations** tended to reinforce the conclusion that while financial or institutional challenges exist in every country, Southeast Asian Studies across Asia is expanding and entering a new phase where subjects such as cultural studies and economic integration are becoming more robust. In Australia, a new SEA Center has just opened at Sydney University, and there are five centers of study on SEA in southern China. Several speakers critiqued the "global problematics" perspective favored in some disciplines, feeling this overlooked important regional histories and social dimensions; at the same time, it was noted that inter-regional contacts were expanding within area studies itself (as evidenced by the Toyota Foundation's support for a conference on Asian Studies in Africa, and the IIAS initiative with a similar theme on Asia-Africa interactions).

Finally, the audience did not seem to be worried about the definition of area studies and its relevance to contemporary scholarship. As one speaker noted, SEA is important as a context of study in many fields. The question energizing us is not "What is Southeast Asia?," but rather "What is interesting in Southeast Asia?".

**Tamara Loos (Cornell) was also scheduled to be a presenter, but was unable to come to Macau. During discussion, I offered a brief comment on the HLF review of the field and directions of SEAS in the U.S.

Appendix F: List of Acronyms

AAS	Association for Asian Studies
ACLS	American Council of Learned Societies
AFA	Advanced Filipino Abroad program (University of Hawaii, Manoa)
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ARI	Asia Research Institute
ASK	Advanced Study of Khmer (University of Hawaii, Manoa)
AST	Advanced Study of Thai (Jackson School of International Studies, University of Washington)
CORMOSEA	Committee on Research Materials on Southeast Asia
COTI	Consortium on Teaching Indonesian
COTSEAL	Consortium of Teachers of Southeast Asian Languages
DL	Distance Learning
DOE	U.S. Department of Education
EuroSEAS	European Association for South East Asian Studies
FLAS	Foreign Language and Area Studies (scholarship awards of the U.S. Department of Education)
GPA	Group Projects Abroad
GUAVA	Group of Universities for the Advancement of Vietnamese in America
HLF	Henry Luce Foundation
ICAS	International Convention of Asia Scholars
IIAS	International Institute for Asian Studies
LCTL	Less Commonly Taught Languages
MOOCS	Massive Open Online Courses
NIU	Northern Illinois University
NRC	National Resource Center (designation of the U.S. Department of Education's Title VI Program)
SEA	Southeast Asia
SEAsian	Southeast Asian
SEAS	Southeast Asian Studies
SEASREP	Southeast Asian Studies Regional Exchange Program
SEASSI	Southeast Asian Studies Summer Institute
SSRC	Social Science Research Council
STEM	Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics
UC	University of California system
UCLA	University of California, Los Angeles
VASI	Vietnamese Advanced Study Institute