From AAASS to ASEEES –

The Future of Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies

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ABSTRACT

This presentation will lay out a short history of AAASS – its founding, the critical years of the 1980s-1990s, and the recent transition to ASEEES, which had a major impact on the association’s strategic outlook. The paper will then discuss some current ASEEES projects, particularly as they relate to the directions in the US policy. Since 9/11/2001 to the present, the US policies towards foreign affairs and international studies have shifted in ways that were positive for our field at times, particularly in the early 2000s, and undesirable at other times, especially now with the financial crisis and the current administration’s almost singular focus on K-12 education to the detriment of higher education. ASEEES is working to meet the challenges of the new era. The presentation will conclude with select remarks from the current, incoming and recent past presidents, who will provide differing views on the future of the field and the association.

From AAASS to ASEEES

The American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies was officially founded in 1948. It was an outgrowth of the Joint Committee on Slavic Studies (JCSS) of the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) and the
Social Science Research Council (SSRC), which provided support for conferences and publications and disbursed fellowships and grants. In 1938, the JCSS set up a subcommittee specifically for the review of Russian studies, whose main purpose was to establish a national professional organization. In 1948, this subcommittee joined forces with ACLS’s journal, *American Slavic and East European Review (ASEER)*, launched in 1941 by John Hazard of Columbia University, to establish the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies, Inc. The initial goal was primarily to create a “legal umbrella” to publish the journal in the state of New York. Nonetheless, that year is still considered our Association’s official date of establishment.

The naming of the Association in 1948 was not free of controversy and consequences. John Hazard, a legal specialist, drew up the charter and described the formation meeting in his memoirs:

> At the formation meeting [of the AAASS], held at the Harvard Club in New York, Robert Kerner of Berkeley insisted that the name “Russia” be omitted from any titles, and that the word “American” begin any title. He wanted it clear that this was not a front organization to insinuate Soviet propaganda into American scholarship. Consequently, the title of both the Association and the journal began with “American.” To avoid “Russia” in the title, the names of both became lengthy, so much so that Hazard’s former colleague in his law office questioned whether any organization could endure, without ridicule, a title of AAASS (Naimark, 2).

The term “Slavic Studies” was also a concern for some of the subcommittee members. They did recognize and discuss the seeming exclusion
of non-Slavic countries and peoples. But as the field was very much Russian-centric, the concerns of the few were passed over, and the subcommittee adopted the name – AAASS. It is perhaps ironic that sixty years later both “American” and “Slavic” became the main impetus for the Association’s name change, but I will discuss that a little later in this presentation.

There is no denying the fact that the origins of the Association and our field were very much tied to the US government and its involvement in World War II. Many professors and graduate students in the field worked for the Research and Analysis (R&A) division of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) to provide knowledge about region for the US war efforts. The USSR division brought together specialists in various disciplines to produce the kind of interdisciplinary, rigorous, and comprehensive analysis that we consider as “area studies.” These specialists in the R&A were the founders of the field and the Association.

A number of American universities established area studies programs and research institutes in the immediate post-war period, including notably Columbia University, Harvard University, the University of California at Berkeley, Yale, and the University of Washington. By 1951, the total faculty in the field nationally was 64 with 264 registered graduate students. After the difficulty McCarthy era, the Sputnik launch in 1957 suddenly brought intense national interest in the USSR, and with the subsequent Congressional National Defense Education Act a year later, the increased financial support encouraged the growth in a number of area studies centers and specialists.

With the growth in the number of specialists and students, ASEER and JCSS coordinated the 1960 launch of AAASS as a national professional membership organization. The journal ASEER was also enlarged and renamed as, Slavic Review: American Quarterly of Soviet and East European Studies (starting in
Donald Treadgold of the University of Washington was named the first editor of this new AAASS publication. Since its inception, Slavic Review has been the foremost peer-reviewed journal in our field and has defined “area studies” in its interdisciplinary and rigorous demand on research and analysis. Under the current editorship of Mark Steinberg at the University of Illinois, Slavic Review maintains its stellar reputation as a leading journal. In 1964, the Association organized its first national convention. Initially the conventions were held every three years so that it would not take attendance away from regional affiliate conferences, but soon thereafter it became an annual event.

Although the general impression may be that AAASS grew steadily from 1960, in reality the Association grew in fits and starts. The membership grew to 2,000 by the end of 1960s, but the initial boom years were over, although it took a while to recognize this (Atkinson 20). The Brezhnevan zastoi provided a stable, relatively tranquil period for the US government, and both domestic and global concerns were turned elsewhere, toward such as the Vietnam War and Civil Rights movement. But this all changed in the 80s, as you know.

The 1980’s and 1990’s were important years for the stabilization and growth of the Association due to both the confluence of world events and intra-organizational changes and initiatives. In the early ‘80s, the United States saw diminishing support for Slavic and East European studies; funding sources (governmental and private) for organizations and academic centers shrank at an alarming rate, government aid for research and international exchange programs was cut, languages studies and contemporary political/economic affairs were largely ignored, and as a result, there were increasingly fewer academic positions available in the field, as well as decreased number of graduate students. Within the Association, the new Executive Director inherited an organization with an
unstable financial past. However, despite this feeble beginning to the decade, the Association transcended these circumstances to establish itself as a leading organization within the field of Soviet and East European studies.

The new Executive Director, Dorothy Atkinson (1982-1994), successfully established a firm financial footing for AAASS. She did this by establishing an endowment, operating the main office efficiently, as well as separating the Association from a big financial burden (*The Current Digest of the Soviet Press*). Operating in the black, the Association was finally in the position to do more for its members and for the field. The first step, for its members, was to expand its newsletter, *NewsNet*, to include information that would be valuable to researchers. For the field as a whole, the Association undertook a Public Education Program (PEP) in order to increase high school teachers’ interest in Eastern Europe by providing seminars, bibliographies, and audio-visual lists.

Throughout the ‘80s, AAASS consistently took opportunities to get involved in advancing the field through non-political channels. These included attending Coalition for the Advancement of Foreign Languages and International Studies (CAFLIS) meetings to propose ways to meet the needs in the field, representing Soviet and East European studies within the National Council of Area Studies Associations, continuing to work with ICCEES on World Congresses, consulting with the National Archives on the return of Imperial Russian archive materials to the USSR (in 1989), and meeting with private foundations about funding for programs in the field.

With the fall of the Soviet Union, there arose the need for a restructuring of the field. Many different states with different trajectories called for more varied and greater academic specialization. In addition, there was also a need for more training in languages other than Russian in order to achieve quality
scholarship of these transitional states. The Association immediately ramped up pleas for funding for the field. Successful at this, university area centers could expand and provide more opportunities for undergraduates and graduate students to specialize in Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union. The decade of mid 80s to the mid 90s was arguably the golden era for the Association producing an exceptionally large cohort of top-notch scholars in a variety of disciplines with solid disciplinary training and area knowledge plus access to plethora of new data and methodologies. AAASS membership peaked in 1997 at 3,610.

Then came another transformation for the Association. Beyond the seismic shifts in the political geography of our field, an academic backlash against “area studies” began, particularly in the social sciences – especially political science and economics. At the same time, anthropology in our field was growing in leaps and bounds with access to the region that did not really exist until the 90s. We also began to see an influx of scholars from the region teaching and studying in US institutions in large numbers. The field and the Association were changing rapidly. Within this context, Katherine Verdery, the first anthropologist to serve as the AAASS President in 2005, called for a change in the Association’s name. It was thought that the name “American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies” did not fit the scope of the Association anymore. Almost 60 years after the Association’s inception and more than a decade after the end of the Cold War, scholarship in the area had gone well beyond the limited range of “Slavic Studies.”

At first, some people argued that the Association should keep its name. Many people claimed that AAASS is like a brand name and changing it would be detrimental to the organization. Other people argued that the name never really
reflected the scope of interests within the membership, but that it was always understood that the Association covered more than its name indicated. On the other hand, many argued that a name change was necessary to reflect the change in our field and to attract more members (especially those studying Central Asia and the Caucasus) who might now join under the new name.

For those who advocated a name change, a whole new debate arose surrounding the inclusion of politicized words like “Eurasia” and “East Europe.” Despite the fact that the US State Department uses the term “Eurasia” to denote the region of the former USSR, many scholars still felt that it was a highly political term that was inappropriate due to its lack of a single meaning. For example, some perceived the term as an ideological nod toward Central Asia’s ‘valued’ connection with Europe, while others found the term to be too inclusive and not separating which parts of Europe or Asia are covered by the Association. Then, still others found the term to be a way of including a whole region under Russia’s influence (including some countries that would prefer to stay outside of this definition). Then, those who advocated the use of the term “East Europe” were met with arguments that those countries who would be put into this category, like Poland and Slovakia, would prefer to be called “Central Europe”.

In the end, “East Europe” and “Eurasian”, along with “Slavic,” were included in the Association’s new name after a couple of years of debate and a final, membership-wide vote in 2008. The new name, Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies, was viewed as an inclusive name with an easy-to-remember acronym (ASEEES), which is arguable since we still can’t agree on how to pronounce it. The name was legally changed from AAASS to ASEEES in July 2010 when the Association moved from Harvard to the University of Pittsburgh.
The name change debate and the member vote signaled a fundamental shift in the Association’s strategic vision as well. The first aspect of this shift is the increased internationalization of the organization. This is occurring as more members from the region both teach and study in the US. The organization has increasingly made it our goal to integrate more scholars who teach/study in the region into the Association. We are also reaching out to associations and scholars in other parts of the world, especially in East Asia. Hence my delight to be attending this conference.

The second aspect of the shift is the goal for greater inclusion of Central Asian and Caucasian studies. This has been somewhat slow-going. I believe that the Association was slow to react to the rapid increase in scholarship in the region. As a result, new societies, such as the Central Eurasian Studies Society, were created to fill the lacuna publishing their own journals and holding their own conferences. Some scholars also associate more closely with the Middle Eastern studies. We plan to work deliberately to reclaim and bring more specialists into our membership, publications and the convention.

Another major project for the Association has nothing to do with the name change but everything to do with the current financial crisis. The events of 9/11, 2001 led to a shift in national thinking about understanding other cultures. Policy makers and political scientists started to move away from the dismissive attitude towards area studies of the 1990s, and the US government boosted its financial support for area studies. Title VI funding for area studies centers, went from ca $78 million to $125 million a year. And the funding did not flow only to Middle Eastern studies; the REEE studies centers also saw an increase in funding particularly for the study of Central Asia, the Caucasus and Islam more generally. It is indeed true that that support and interest in Middle Eastern
studies increased dramatically – the policy makers had shifted from the specter of Communism to the specter of Islamic Terrorism. Nonetheless our field also benefited from the overall increase in interest in international affairs. Then the financial crash took place in 2008, and the makeup of the US Congress changed dramatically in 2010.

President Obama in his many speeches often talks about the importance of global and international understanding and the importance of our young people to be trained as global citizens. Nonetheless, his administration, especially Education Secretary Arne Duncan, has been almost singularly focused on K-12 education. The administration’s main interest in higher education is focused on undergraduate graduation rates and curbing the rise in tuition. These are both extremely important, but the limitations of this interest leaves us with little room to advocate for the importance of international education and national expertise. We also lost champions in the US Congress, especially Congressman David Obey from Wisconsin when he retired in 2010. With the influx of Tea Party members of Congress bent on cutting the federal budget at all cost, the Title VI program suddenly lost 40% of funding overnight. We are also worried about the future of other federal funding in our field, such as the Title VIII funding that funds advanced research in our field. This has produced a ripple effect as states have further cut funding for higher education.

This current funding climate forces our Association to concentrate on two projects – advocacy and fundraising. We must play a more proactive role in advocating for our field and explaining the significance of maintaining international expertise to the members of Congress and the Administration. Institutional memory amongst them is extremely short. To this end, we are creating an Advocacy Committee, led by our incoming President-Elect Steve
Hanson.

Our second project is fundraising. Since inception, our field has benefited greatly from federal funding. Although we have had some scary moments when we feared funding cuts, particularly in the early 80s, the continued government support may have led to a certain amount of complacency. While the current uncertain situation may be just another blip in a cycle that seems to swing up and down every decade or so, the Association plans to move forward to provide research support particularly for younger scholars. The bottom line is that the Association, like any other non-profit or even for-profit corporation, must be nimble and entrepreneurial, which leads me to a discussion on the future of ASEEES as well as the field.

**Future of ASEEES and the Field**

In thinking about the future of ASEEES and the field, I took this as an opportunity to interview the current, as well as incoming and past, presidents of the Association to get their input. I asked them about what they saw as the strengths and weaknesses of the Association and the field and where they see them in ten years. Here I will discuss the input from Katherine Verdery, professor of East European anthropology at CUNY and president in 2005; Mark Beissinger, professor of Russian politics at Princeton University and president in 2007; Beth Holmgren, professor of East European literature at Duke University and president in 2008; Bruce Grant, professor of Eurasian anthropology at NYU and president in 2011; Judith Deutsch Kornblatt, professor of Russian literature at the University of Wisconsin and current president; Diane Koenker, professor of Russian history at the University of Illinois and incoming president in 2013; and
Steve Hanson, professor of Russian politics at the College of William and Mary who was recently elected to serve as president in 2014.

So what do they see as the strengths and weaknesses of ASEEES? Steve Hanson declared that ASEEES is the leading area studies organization in a key region of the world and therefore it occupies a special niche. Steve and others noted that the Associations’ continued interdisciplinarity as a key strength. Beth Holmgren noted that the Association has excellent representation of specialists in history and literature, and growing representation (after fall-off) of political scientists, sociologists, and anthropologists, and is able to keep up the student membership level at steady 20-25% of total membership. Diane Koenker noted that ASEEES is “a voluntary – not a disciplinary – organization that brings scholars together on the basis of shared commitment to understanding a region/culture/common history.” Mark Beissinger highlighted the annual convention as the premier event for scholarly exchanges across disciplines.

Judith Kornblatt acknowledged that the Association’s interdisciplinary strength is simultaneously its weakness. For people who are on the margins of a discipline, the Association serves as a home; for those who are entrenched in a discipline, they may not be so eager to be part of ASEEES. The question for her is, how do we capitalize on our interdisciplinarity and our authority in the field. More on this later.

Diane Koenker noted that another strength with associated weakness is the flexibility of the Association’s boundaries, especially disciplinary but also culturally and geographically. Such flexibility allows for inclusiveness as well as responsiveness to change. But correlative, as the boundaries and definitions of the “field” change, the Association may not be able to play the exclusive role in defining the field, as it had in the pre-1989 era.
For Bruce Grant a main strength is that we have aimed to respond to the huge demographic changes in the association, specifically brought about, in part, by the emigration of a large number of scholars from the FSU to the institutions that people our association, but equally so by the increased global access to new contingents of scholars from the FSU. That said, he urged that we should go much further. “Despite the electronic access that enables all of us to interact, distance still matters: we are only partly connected to European and Eurasian colleagues; yet we are hardly connected to colleagues from South Asia, East Asia, and South America. As the largest scholarly association, we do want to be open to as many conversations as possible.”

Beth Holmgren raised another aspect of interdisciplinarity and noted that the Association did not bring in enough non-academic specialists to its membership. She felt that this gap must be addressed, since most of our undergraduate majors and MA students go into nonprofit and government work or into business or law. Those people want to remain in touch with field-specific research. She hopes to see a diversification in the Association’s outreach and membership (academic and non-academic) over the next 10 years.

Both Steve Hanson and Mark Beissinger acknowledged the struggle to keep social science a robust part of the Association. Mark noted that for younger social scientists disciplinary associations and venues have become more important, but this does not mean that the health of the field is weak, and while the Association and the field are intimately linked there are distinctions between the direction of the field, or subfields, and the Association.

Then I asked the presidents, where they saw the field of Russian, East European, and Eurasian studies headed in the next 10 years? I cite Diane Koenker’s comments extensively:
Historically, disciplines have consolidated because there was a shared intellectual agenda and a commitment to institutionalizing that agenda. Disciplines in a way are more arbitrary constructs than geographic regions, but nonetheless, the definition of “Russian, East European, and Eurasian studies” is highly contingent on context... I can imagine a world in which the reason for the current unity of this region comes under challenge. Formerly eastern European states may have increasing commonalities with western Europe – similar economic challenges, social problems, migration patterns, cultural models – that make their relationship to their former status as colonies, satellites, sites of Slavic nationalism – less relevant. The rise of an Islamic empire will challenge the desire of our “Central Asian” specialists to relate to the Russian metropole, and such scholars will have more in common with Islamic, Turkic, Persian experts. They will be trained in other parts of the university.

Less likely is the fragmentation of “Russia” into parts, and therefore “Eurasia” – and its expanse – will remain a powerful force for intellectual cohesion and interpretation. For this reason, I feel very optimistic about the future of Russian history, as a bedrock of scholarly investigation of this place. I think that historians are particularly well placed to adapt to new intellectual modes of inquiry...: social history; gender; cultural history (history of emotions); empire; not to mention race.... Historians will borrow from their disciplinary partners in literature, politics, economics, anthropology, environmental studies, etc. There is currently a “neo-political” turn which is driven still by the exotically new availability of “archives” and the persistently open questions such as the
nature of Stalinist rule. There has lately been a return to some of the topics popular in the 1960s, such as bureaucracy, intellectual history, and revolutionary will. Perhaps there will also be a return to themes of peasants and serfdom; and to economic history. I am not sure we will see a return to quantitative history, but some of the new digital methods of textual analysis are already offering interesting new ideas.

I would say, finally, that the field seems less driven by “big ideas” than when I began in the 1970s, more by “small deeds.” That’s characteristic of the American academy as a whole, and perhaps American culture, with the proliferation of voices, perspectives, subcultures, subpolities.

Bruce Grant noted: “In the next 10-20 years, I see our association peopled by members who have a much broader intellectual training, background, and life experience than that which we’ve seen since the 1950s. This makes our conversations smarter and genuinely more free-ranging. But it also ups the ante for American scholars, who (by my experience) will have to up their game when it comes to international literatures. Americans might be much more practiced at persuasive argument, presentation, and formation, but we frequently lag on content, by comparison, to speak in very broad terms.”

Bruce Grant is also curious to follow the eastern European scholars who have a much greater social incentive to create new paths. They may not necessarily be embraced by European Studies (prospects of which are not exciting anyhow). His hunch is that a new generation of East Europeanists will be writing different kinds of histories, literary criticisms and social studies.

Mark Beissinger reiterated, and Steve Hanson concurred, that social
scientists in our field have, over the last ten to fifteen years, achieved the kind of integration into and recognition from their disciplines that earlier generations of specialists on our region simply could not have aspired to. And that’s been a healthy development overall. The real danger facing the field that he sees has been the cutback at universities in the number of people working within the social sciences in our world area—this is a real cause for concern. Part of this has to do with world events and media attention cycles. There are, for instance, simply fewer graduate students being trained in the social sciences on our region. Many major universities have not replaced the social science faculty focused on our region upon retirement or departure. Yale has no senior Russian specialist in political science; Tim Colton is the only person at Harvard (where traditionally there had been two or three people); indeed, there are relatively few senior people in political science focused on our field at the top Ph.D. producing institutions in the country.

While Mark Beissinger focused on disciplinary constraints, Judith Kornblatt focused on the move towards greater interdisciplinarity in the US academy. The universities are developing more and more interdisciplinary programs, such as a program in democracy building or security studies. Judith argues that the field and the Association, with its inherent interdisciplinary trajectory, should draw on this turn to interdisciplinarity in higher education and develop our own interdisciplinary programs and curricula.

Judith noted that the field of Russian literature is also moving in that direction. She cautioned, however, that academia is slow to change; people’s careers are long; a lot is invested in the existing institutional structures. Thus, innovations to the field will not happen overnight. Nonetheless, the field must
and will change. She can already see the changes by looking at the new job announcements, which are already more interdisciplinary, requiring knowledge of 19th Russian literature plus film studies, for instance. Our graduate students must be trained. The graduate programs notably at Stanford and Wisconsin Slavic Departments are already in the process of restructuring training of these students.

For Beth Holmgren who specializes in Polish literature, she doesn’t see enough interdisciplinarity in her field. East European literature is usually taught by one professor in an essentially Russian department. She would like to see more connections with Eastern European history, anthropology, and sociology and to make connections with other European and non-European literatures and cultures with which we share similar issues—e.g., relationships between literature and dissidence, literature and the market, literature and nationalisms/ethnicities and so on. For the broader Russian, East European, and Eurasian studies, Beth emphatically argued that we must maintain and deepen our area specific knowledge but without ghettoizing ourselves in terms of discipline and regional studies and, at the same time, not be subsumed by a European Studies or Asian Studies which is largely directed by those who know nothing about Eastern Europe, Russia, and Central Asia.

Bruce Grant raised a potentially provocative point by claiming “post social” is fading fast as a heuristic category, particularly in anthropology. He notes that there just isn’t the groundswell in the areas we study to think so regularly within the socialist framework. He sees the terminology going in new directions “on the ground,” not necessarily neoliberal or postcolonial, etc., although both are sometimes used. A new vocabulary is being developed, which he finds fascinating. He underlines, however, that a new vocabulary
still needs to be historically well informed. To me the most interesting thing is to see how that goes.

Katherine Verdery raised a similar point. She sees the anthropology of Eastern Europe becoming more fragmented, with the various parts drifting in different directions (the EU member states in one direction, those still outside it – in CIS, not in CIS, in Russia, etc. – in other directions), but that it will continue to provide useful correctives to the “wisdom” of political scientists, since, as she says, “anthropologists actually go to the field.” She states,

My field generally tries to relate happenings in one place to those in closely related places for which an argument can be made for controlled comparison. For several decades that basis for comparison was the shared socialist experience, and for a number of years after 1989 that continued to be true. I detect a tendency on the part of young scholars now, however, not to pay so much attention to the socialist past—they don’t seem to be into path-dependency explanations—which would help to hold together the anthropologies of the different parts of the region. So I think there will be a drift in the direction of the anthropological problems being addressed (consumption, migration) and away from the area focus.

Nonetheless, Katherine stated, it will be important for these anthropologists to retain a connection to ASEEES so as to keep tabs on other disciplinary research about specific countries.

I end this presentation with some thoughts from Steve Hanson because I appreciate his optimistic outlook and can-do spirit. Steve proclaims that Slavic, East European and Eurasian studies are in a good place. In the last twenty five
years, the field has generated a wealth of information – using new data and methodologies – which has had a cumulatively positive impact. We have been able to be part of the wave of change in social sciences and in social change in general. He feels blessed to live through a period of such great scholarship by top-notch scholars in the field. Also, after a period of disdain for area studies, he feels that the policy world is again waking up to the importance of local knowledge - understanding local cultures, history, language, etc. Interdisciplinary work has become much more mainstream, and, as Judith Kornblatt also observed, universities are constantly pushing for more interdisciplinary curricula. In Political Science, he sees increasing frustration with formal models, with more scholars wanting to combine formal models with area knowledge, which he sees as a very positive development.

To Steve, consideration of terminology is also essential. Some social scientists recoil at the term “area studies;” they have only a stereotypical understanding of it. When given a clear explanation, however, they accept its significance and methodological rigor. Some argue that we should just throw away the term “area studies” and come up with a new vocabulary. Steve does not agree; he articulates that we should embrace it and actively define it for others to understand and accept rather than be defined by others’ misunderstanding. In short, we need to take charge of our own narrative.

This is also true of the term “Eurasia,” which is fraught with potential problems. But it has important categorical value. Again, instead of being weighed down by its historical, ideological baggage, we as the scholars in the field should be the ones to define it for others. As Diane Koenker also noted, Steve Hanson believes that “Eurasia” allows for all sorts of possibilities and ways to think about border zones and cross-regional studies.
The biggest concern at the moment is the changing structure of federal funding, the impending sequestration, and its implications for the field, but the answer to this challenge is for us as scholars and the Association to be more entrepreneurial. We are forced to think creatively about what services ASEEES can and should provide; we have to be willing to take risks and try new ideas and programs – develop a new paradigm in area studies. Being the foremost organization in the field, ASEEES should take the lead in this 21st century rethinking of our field.

These are challenging times, but these are also moments of opportunity. We should stop fretting that our field is somehow held tenuously together by the legacy of the Communist past. We acknowledge that that is part of the history of the field – a foundational part, but the field encompasses much more than that one trajectory. We need to actively define what we mean by Slavic, East European and Eurasian Studies. Our field is no less coherent than Latin American African, South Asian, or East Asian studies. At the expense of sounding redundant, let me reiterate, we must take charge of our own narrative about our field. In the 1940s the specialists of our world region laid out the methodological structure for area studies for all to follow. Seventy odd years later, we can again play a crucial role in redefining it.

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