Decolonisation, Modernisation and Nation-Building: Political Development Theory and the Appeal of Communism in Southeast Asia, 1945–1975

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Modernisation theory and political development theory played a key role in the formalisation of the study of Southeast Asia, while the dramatic transitions from colonies to nation-states in the region and the deepening war in Vietnam were also pivotal to the rise and transformation of modernisation theory. This article provides a critical historical overview of the rise and elaboration of theories of political development and nation-building between 1945 and 1975.

Introduction: ideologies of Western dominance and ideologies of modernisation

Michael Adas, in his important study of 'ideologies of Western dominance', questions the idea that the influential theories of modernisation that emerged during the late colonial and early Cold War periods were 'primarily' new concepts created to 'counter the appeal of Communism' in the 'underdeveloped world'. In his view, although the theories of modernisation of the Cold War era were 'recast in development jargon', they were grounded in ideas which were 'deeply rooted' in the 'historical experience' of Western Europe and North America.[1] Michael E. Latham's innovative examination of 'ideologies of modernisation' parallels Adas and concludes that, contrary to the arguments of their advocates, those theories that emerged in the 1950s and early 1960s 'were neither decisive intellectual breakthroughs nor completely new political initiatives'. He argues that while the basic assumptions of these emergent theories of modernisation were clearly grounded in the culture of Cold War North America, modernisation theorists also 'reframed' earlier 'imperial ideals' in order to tell US citizens 'who they were' and to clarify what the projection of US 'power could achieve'. As with earlier 'imperial ideology', says Latham, modernisation theory distinguished between 'backward' and 'advanced' regions, at the same time as it represented the United States as the 'summit of modernity' with a 'mission to transform a world eager to learn the lessons only America could teach'.[2]

These are sophisticated and insightful analyses; however, both scholars – particularly Adas – place too much emphasis on the relative continuity between the post-1945

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1   Michael Adas, *Machines as the measure of men: Science, technology, and ideologies of Western dominance* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989), pp. 403, 413.
2   Michael E. Latham, *Modernization as ideology: American social science and 'nation building' in the Kennedy era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), pp. 14–15, 58–9, 68.

theories of political and economic development that informed the US modernising mission in the Cold War era on the one hand, and the various ideas about progress and the civilising mission that animated imperial expansion in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries on the other. Their approaches neglect important aspects of the changed circumstances of the post-1945 era and the significance of these changes for the theories of modernisation that emerged in the 1950s. In particular, there is a need to build on their analyses while giving more weight to the transformative character of decolonisation and the Cold War. A key shift in the period in question was not just the growing significance of the idea of development *per se*, but the way in which it was consolidated and naturalised as specifically national development in the context of the establishment of the United Nations and the universalisation of the nation-state system in Asia, Africa and Oceania. This period witnessed the construction – or reconstruction – of nation-states and national identities within the framework of an increasingly global nation-state system that rapidly incorporated the former colonies. Importantly, this also involved the simultaneous reconfiguration of imperial nation-states such as Great Britain, France, Portugal, Holland and Belgium (as well as Japan and the United States) into nation-states shorn of most if not all of their formal colonial possessions and, in some cases, of their imperial pride.

Decolonisation, the universalisation of the nation-state and the Cold War provided the crucial backdrop for the rise and elaboration of modernisation theory and closely related theories of political development and nation-building that were centred on direct or indirect US involvement in the formation and consolidation of stable anti-communist national political systems. After 1945 the nation-state became the central and unquestioned unit of study for modernisation theorists and the natural object of a burgeoning number of exercises in state-mediated national development and nation-building.[3] At the same time, modernisation theory and theories of nation-building exercised a profound influence on, and were bound up with, the rise and transformation of area studies generally and Asian Studies specifically.[4] The dominant narratives within Asian Studies between the 1940s and the 1970s emphasised the need for the various nation-states of Asia to develop gradually towards a relatively universal form of capitalist modernity. Modernisation theorists sometimes conceived of the new nations in ways that at least implicitly acknowledged that they were historically constructed and contingent, but their work generally treated these countries as natural units that would – or at least ought

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3   Nation-building in the Cold War era is defined here as primarily US- or Soviet-sponsored efforts, with important relative exceptions such as United Nations involvement in the Congo from 1960–4. The *Operation des Nations Unies au Congo* (ONUC) was the biggest UN action since the Korean War, which had formally been a UN initiative despite the fact that it was an overwhelming American operation in practise. Furthermore, it was not until the post-Cold War era, when the UN again began to play a more significant role in nation-building efforts, that it intervened on the scale of its operation in the Congo in the early 1960s; Karin von Hippel, *Democracy by force: US military intervention in the post-Cold War world* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).
4   For background on area studies, see Robert A. McCaughey, *International studies and academic enterprise: A chapter in the enclosure of American learning* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984); Immanuel Wallerstein, 'The unintended consequences of Cold War area studies', in *The Cold War and the university: Toward an intellectual history of the postwar years*, ed. André Schiffrin (New York: New Press, 1997), pp. 195–231; Bruce Cumings, 'Boundary displacement: Area studies and international studies during and after the Cold War', in *Universities and empire: Money and politics in the social sciences during the Cold War*, ed. Christopher Simpson (New York: New Press, 1998), pp. 159–88.

to – evolve along a single path (or at best a limited number of paths) towards modernity. Meanwhile, the use of political models and lessons with little or no regard for questions of time and place further undermined modernisation theory's relationship to the temporal and spatial specificity of the formation, consolidation or collapse of new nation-states in this period. While the theory played a key role in the consolidation and routinisation of the idea of political and economic development as national development after 1945, Southeast Asia occupied a particularly important position in the study of modernisation by North American political scientists in the 1950s and 1960s.[5]

The concern with nation-building and national development at the centre of modernisation theory was linked to a number of major trends specific to the period from the 1940s to the 1970s. To begin with, the idea of national development after 1945 involved the representation and promotion of Western European and North American measures of political, social and economic progress as increasingly universal and national solutions. Although many of these particular approaches had their origins in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a number of them were only consolidated in Western Europe and North America, along with parts of Latin America, Central Europe and Japan, in the 1930s or even the 1940s.[6] After 1945 these formulations increasingly involved a universal emphasis, theoretically, on the national economy and national industrialisation, as well as agrarian reform and agro-industrialisation, and a privileging of the role of the national government or state in the management of economic development. In a wider sense, national development increasingly involved – again in theory – a 'social democratic' emphasis on education, health care and other public institutions

5   Southeast Asia (or South-East Asia) is now widely understood as that part of Asia that lies east of India and south of China and encompasses the contemporary nation-states of Burma, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Brunei, the Philippines, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam and, most recently, East Timor. However, the concerted treatment of Southeast Asia as a distinct historical, political, economic and geographical unit is of relatively recent origin. While usage of the term can be traced back to the nineteenth century, it only gained currency amongst scholars, colonial officials, policy-makers and nationalist leaders in the 1930s and early 1940s. For example, 'Southeast Asia' was used by the end of the 1930s in various reports and documents by the Institute of Pacific Relations, founded in Honolulu in 1925 to promote understanding in the Pacific. Between 1943–6 the theatre of war under the overall direction of Lord Mountbatten was identified as the 'South-East Asia Command'; however, the territory covered by this command, the boundaries of which were expanded in the waning days of the war, never included the Philippines or all of French Indochina. Meanwhile, in the early post-1945 era the French government sought to promote a 'Southeast Asia Union' centred on its colonies in the region as part of its effort to retain its possessions and its influence. This was countered by the 'Southeast Asian League', which was set-up in 1947 by the Lao Prince Souphanouvong (the so-called Red Prince), who became its first General Secretary. In its relatively short existence the Southeast Asian League sought to mobilise regional opposition to colonialism. The subsequent formation of the South-East Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO) in 1954 and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 1967, and the growing currency of the term during the Vietnam War and the Cold War more generally, were complemented by the proliferation of area specialists and courses on the region at universities and colleges inside and outside of Southeast Asia. See Russell H. Fifield, 'The concept of Southeast Asia: Origins, development and evaluation', *South-East Asian Spectrum*, 4, 1 (1975): 42–51; Donald Emmerson, 'Southeast Asia—what's in a name?', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 15, 1 (1984): 1–21. Also see Geoffrey C. Gunn, *Theravadins, colonialists and commissars in Laos* (Bangkok: White Lotus, 1998).
6   Frederick Cooper and Randall Packard emphasise the importance of the late colonial context, arguing that the 'specific origins' of the idea and practice of development that rose to dominance after the Second World War are to be found in the 'crisis of colonial empires' in the 1930s; Frederick Cooper and Randall Packard, 'Introduction', in *International development and the social sciences: Essays on the history and politics of knowledge*, ed. Frederick Cooper and Randall Packard (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), pp. 6–7, 33 note 10.

to facilitate social advance and the incorporation of the majority of the population into the process of national development. This emphasis was also readily apparent, albeit in significantly different ways, in the state-socialist versions of national development that emerged with the growing influence of the USSR and the People's Republic of China – an influence that the North American proponents of national development sought explicitly to challenge.[7]

With the onset of the Cold War in the late 1940s, the US was increasingly animated by a commitment to construct an open world economy while promoting state-mediated national development as part of its wider effort to contain the USSR and its allies. The hegemonic position of the US in the nation-state system as it was consolidated during the Cold War still bore significant traces of the colonialism and imperialism practised by the European powers and imperial Japan, as well as by the United States (in places such as the Philippines and the Caribbean), in an earlier era.[8] As already suggested, however, despite continuities the American and Soviet Cold War 'empires' departed in important ways from earlier colonial or imperial projects. Most significantly, in political and administrative terms both countries presided over 'empires' made up more or less entirely of formally independent and sovereign nation-states rather than colonies. The role of the US in Latin America by the early twentieth century and the role of Britain in Latin America, as well as Britain and France in the Middle East after World War I, had foreshadowed this new form of 'inter-national' power. In the Cold War era the relationship between the respective superpowers and their allies was increasingly mediated by complex systems of military alliances, regional organisations and new international institutions such as the United Nations, all of which involved formal agreements between ostensibly sovereign nation-states. This represented an important departure from earlier forms of imperialism and colonialism.[9]

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7 The literature on this is of course substantial. See, for example, Robert A. Packenham, *Liberal America and the Third World: Political development ideas in foreign aid and social science* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973); Irene L. Gendzier, *Managing political change: Social scientists and the Third World* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1985); Carlos Ramirez-Faria, *The origins of economic inequality between nations: A critique of Western theories of development and underdevelopment* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1991); Kimber Charles Pearce, *Rostow, Kennedy, and the rhetoric of foreign aid* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2001); *Staging growth: Modernization, development and the global Cold War*, ed. David Engerman *et al.* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003). For discussions of the context for nation-building and national development, see Philip McMichael, *Development and social change: A global perspective*, 2nd edn (Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge Press, 2000), pp. 25–76; David B. Moore, 'Development discourse as hegemony: Towards an ideological history, 1945–1995', in *Debating development discourse: Institutional and popular perspectives*, ed. David B. Moore and Gerald J. Schmitz (London: Macmillan, 1995), pp. 1–53.

8 Mary Ann Heiss, 'The evolution of the imperial idea and US national identity', *Diplomatic History*, 26, 4 (2002): 511–40.

9 In economic terms, meanwhile, the empires of the late-colonial, pre-World War II era were grounded to a great degree in the regulation and control of colonial markets by the colonial powers, in the interests of metropolitan-based corporations and investors. However, the economic arrangements put in place after World War II paved the way for large corporations and financial institutions to increasingly transcend a particular or single metropolitan nation-state on which they had relied for regulatory and other support. US hegemony in the latter part of the twentieth century can be, and has been, characterised as 'post-imperial'. This was particularly the case by the 1970s, by which time the nation-state system had been universalised and the overall contours of the globalisation project were beginning, at least in retrospect, to become apparent; David G. Becker and Richard L. Sklar, 'Introduction', in *Postimperialism in world politics*, ed. David G. Becker and Richard L. Sklar (New York: Praeger, 1999). Also see David G. Becker *et al.*, *Postimperialism: International capitalism and development in the late twentieth century* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1987).

The geopolitical and geoeconomic framework of the Cold War was thus central to national development as a universal ideal. After 1945 the US and the Soviet Union presided over a growing system of alliances and disbursed large quantities of economic and military aid to the 'developing' nations of the 'Third World'; the IMF and the World Bank, as well as the UN, also played a growing role in promoting national development. In this context the idea of development/modernisation as both process and ultimate goal increasingly permeated nationalist narratives worldwide. Most importantly, the global spread of nationalism involved the universalisation, in theory, of the idea of the equality of all nations and of all citizens within all nations. The idea of nationhood carried with it a commitment, at least in the abstract, to democracy, human rights and universal suffrage. The UN Charter explicitly envisioned a global community of formally equal nation-states that were expected to observe the democratic sentiments expressed in that Charter, as well as a range of conventions on human rights. By the 1980s, however, the diverse and often profoundly flawed versions of national development that had emerged and/or been consolidated – and in some cases, such as South Vietnam, had already disappeared – over the previous thirty or forty years were increasingly challenged by the emergent globalisation project. With an increased emphasis on global economic integration and economic liberalism, globalisation compounded the previous failures of national development and nation-building, while also introducing new problems. This trend was accelerated and clarified by the end of the Cold War.[10]

This article explores the rise and transformation of theories of modernisation and ideas of nation-building between 1945 and 1975 and their relationship to US foreign policy, with an emphasis on Southeast Asia. It begins with a brief look at the origins of modernisation theory, including a focus on the Committee on Comparative Politics (established by the Social Science Research Council in 1954), which represented an important site for the generation of political development theory, and the broader rise and consolidation of modernisation theory. This is followed by a discussion of area studies and Asian Studies generally and Southeast Asian Studies more specifically. It will then look at the work of modernisation theorists and Asian specialists such as Lucian W. Pye, closely associated with both the Committee on Comparative Politics and the Center for International Studies (CENIS) at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT); Clifford Geertz, an important figure on the Committee for the Comparative Study of New Nations at the University of Chicago; and George McTurnan Kahin, who was briefly involved with the Committee on Comparative Politics at the outset and played an important role in the establishment and growth of Southeast Asian Studies. Their work on Malaysia, Burma and Indonesia in the 1950s and at the start of the 1960s is given particular attention. The role of Walt Whitman Rostow, a key figure at CENIS and an influential member of the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, is then examined. Finally, the article will examine the changes to modernisation theory in the 1960s and early 1970s, with a particular emphasis on the US-backed nation-building effort in South Vietnam

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10 Mark T. Berger, 'The rise and demise of national development and the origins of post-Cold War capitalism', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 30, 2 (2001): 211–34; Berger, *The battle for Asia: Theories of development, the nation-state system and the changing global order* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003).

(which had become the fulcrum of US policy in Asia) and on the work of Samuel Huntington, as well as influential policy intellectuals at the Rand Corporation such as Guy Pauker.

The changes to modernisation theory in this period were intimately connected to the challenges to, and shifts in orientation of, US foreign policy in Asia and beyond. However, too much emphasis on the perceived shift in modernisation theory in the 1960s away from a focus on democracy to a preoccupation with order, in the context of the reorientation of US foreign policy, is no longer warranted. As recent observers have argued, a close examination of the modernisation literature makes clear that order and stability were always more important than democracy as far as most modernisation theorists were concerned.[11] Far more significant was the shift by the 1950s from overtly racially-based ideas about a civilising mission in the colonies to much more comprehensive ideas about government-mediated national development and an emphasis on the importance of the nation-state as the main object of nation-building and stability in the Cold War era. This was an emphasis that despite differing strategies was increasingly shared by former colonisers and colonised alike, and by all sides in the Cold War.

At the same time, modernisation theory was subject to revision in the 1960s and early 1970s in the context of growing challenges to its explanatory and prescriptive aspirations. An important reorientation was the move away from the psychological emphasis of early modernisation theory and towards an approach that drew on economics and game theory (what would later become widely know as rational choice theory). This change has been characterised variously as a shift from 'constructive counterinsurgency' to 'coercive counterinsurgency' or from classical theory to military modernisation theory. However, it did not involve a dramatic rethinking of the basic assumptions of modernisation theorists and US policy-makers about Washington's geopolitical and geoeconomic objectives in Southeast Asia and beyond.

Decolonisation, the Cold War and nation-building I: 1945–60

The origins of modernisation theory and the emergence of political development theory

Many observers define modernisation theory in a way that includes development economics. However, others such as Colin Leys (whose position is reinforced by Nils Gilman's study of the 'genesis of modernisation theory') argue that it is more accurate to view development economics as having provided the earliest systematic formulations of development theory generally, while modernisation theory is best understood as having appeared in the late 1950s as a particularly North American response by political scientists to the incipient failure of many of the prescriptions of development economists. Other observers prefer to use the term 'political development theory' rather than 'modernisation theory' to describe the work by North American political scientists in the late 1950s and 1960s. In the view of Paul Cammack, political development theory 'drew heavily upon modernisation theory' (which he attributes primarily to the sociological

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11 See, for example, Nils Gilman, *Imposing modernity: Modernization theory and Cold War America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003). I am indebted to Nils Gilman, who allowed me to read his book in its earlier form as his doctoral dissertation: 'Paving the world with good intentions: The genesis of modernization theory' (Ph.D. diss., University of California/Berkeley, 2000).

tradition running from Max Weber to Talcott Parsons and Edward Shils) 'but at the same time engaged in a critical dialogue with it'.[12]

While political development theory played an important role in the rise and/or revision of modernisation theory, the latter term can still be seen to encompass conceptions of political, social and cultural change that extend beyond political development as such. At the same time, I agree that development economics should be regarded as an early form of development theory that is distinct from modernisation. However, while this article will use the term 'modernisation theory' to refer primarily to discussions of political development, it will also be used more broadly, as is widely accepted, to describe the growing array of liberal theories of modernisation that emerged after 1945 and increasingly reached across the social sciences, encompassing political science generally as well as history, sociology and area studies.

This formulation allows the Social Science Research Council's (SSRC) Committee on Comparative Politics – which was established in 1954 and became the key site for the production of political development theory – to be seen as an important force behind modernisation theory in the 1950s and early 1960s whether the latter term is defined narrowly or broadly.[13] The founding members of the committee were Lucian W. Pye, Guy J. Pauker, Taylor Cole, Roy Macridis, George McTurnan Kahin and Gabriel Almond. Chaired by Almond from 1954 to 1963, the Committee provided a key focus for the production and dissemination of modernisation theory. It is worth noting that of the six founding members, Pye, Pauker and Kahin did most or all of their work on Southeast Asia. However, while the first two continued to play a key role in both the Committee and the government-political development theory nexus, Kahin (who was a key figure in the consolidation of Southeast Asian Studies, as will be discussed below, and became a prominent critic of US intervention in South Vietnam in the 1960s) was eased off the Committee within a few years of its establishment.

From the outset the Committee on Comparative Politics sponsored a wide range of academic and policy-oriented publications, as well as a number of conferences and seminars. Its goal was to articulate a theory of political development; however, over time many crucial concepts were used inconsistently, and no full-blown theory could be said to have emerged. Despite its scientific aspirations and despite the widespread usage of the term 'modernisation theory', what the Committee provided was primarily an outlook or approach, rather than a theory *per se*. It also played an important role in the establishment of acceptable parameters for the professional study of politics. The

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12 Paul Cammack, *Capitalism and democracy in the Third World: The doctrine of political development* (London: Leicester University Press, 1997), pp. 44–5. Also see Richard A. Higgott, *Political development theory: The contemporary debate* (London: Croom Helm, 1983). General discussions of development and modernisation theory include Colin Leys, *The rise and fall of development theory* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), especially pp. 8–9; and Gilman, *Imposing modernity*. For discussions of modernisation with reference to development economics, see John Martinussen, *Society, state and market* (London: Zed Press, 1997), pp. 61–6, 167–72; Peter Wallace Preston, *Development theory: An introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), pp. 153–78; and Latham, *Modernization as ideology*, pp. 30–46.

13 On the origins and early history of the SSRC see Donald Fisher, *Fundamental development of the social sciences: Rockefeller philanthropy and the United States Social Science Research Council* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993).

political scientists associated with the Committee were aware that they were engaged in the production of a theoretical alternative to Marxism. In the early 1980s, for example, a former member asserted that its 'purpose' had been to 'formulate a non-Communist theory of change and thus to provide a non-Marxian alternative for the developing nations'.[14]

The desire to generate an alternative theoretical apparatus to Marxism is nicely encapsulated by the Committee's efforts to marginalise the concept of the 'state'. The foundations for such an effort were laid after World War I, by which time the concept of the state was increasingly displaced and the discipline of political science was consolidated and professionalised around pluralism as both the basis of US politics and the norm by which political theory and practice elsewhere were to be measured. In the 1950s Gabriel Almond and his fellow scholars avoided using the word 'state', favouring the term 'political system', as in their view the former was afflicted with at least two important shortcomings. It was felt to be a vague term for which it was difficult to agree on an exact definition; moreover, scholars believed that any definition would marginalise or exclude important elements of the political process. They apparently took the view that the dramatic social and political changes which had occurred since the Industrial Revolution meant that identifying the boundaries between state and society had become ever more difficult.[15] Ultimately, however, these reasons for avoiding the notion of the state appear less persuasive than the fact that World War II and the Cold War had provided North American political science with a new set of global imperatives. For example, in a 1944 report on the future of comparative politics, Karl Loewenstein argued that political scientists should dispense with any narrow focus on the state and become 'a conscious instrument of social engineering' for 'imparting' the US 'experience to other nations' and the scientific integration of 'their institutions into a universal pattern of government'. He envisioned the emergence of a 'total science', arguing that 'the frontier posts of comparative government must be moved boldly' to include both the entire world and a range of other academic disciplines, which would ensure 'access to the true Gestalt of foreign political civilisations'. In 1953 David Easton argued that the Cold War made it a national and international imperative to clarify the political lexicon, purge the concept of the state and produce general theoretical laws which would encompass all important political activities and transcend specific cultures.[16]

14 The anonymous former Committee member is quoted in Howard Wiarda, *Ethnocentrism in foreign policy: Can we understand the Third World?* (Washington: American Enterprise Institute, 1985), p. 63. David M. Ricci, *The tragedy of political science: Politics, scholarship, and democracy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), pp. 263–4, comments on the Committee's failure to come up with a full-blown theory.
15 Timothy Mitchell, 'The limits of the state: Beyond statist approaches and their critics', *American Political Science Review*, 85, 1 (1991): 78–9. On the rise of political science as a discipline, see John G. Gunnell, 'The declination of the "state" and the origins of American pluralism', in *Political science in history: Research programs and political traditions*, ed. James Farr *et al.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 19–23, 29–30, 39–40.
16 David Easton, *The political system: An inquiry into the state of political science*, rev. edn (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), pp. 1–4. Karl Loewenstein's quotations are from his 'Report on the research panel on comparative government', *American Political Science Review*, 38, 2 (1944): 541–7; quoted in Timothy Mitchell, 'Society, economy, and the state effect', in *State/culture: State-formation after the cultural turn*, ed. George Steinmetz (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), p. 78.

While modernisation theorists sought to find alternatives to the 'state' and articulate 'a non-Marxian alternative for the developing nations', they were also attempting (as Easton's comments suggest) to shift anti-Communism away from the populist hysteria of the McCarthy era towards a far more scientifically grounded political position. Modernisation theory was, as Gilman has suggested, a 'high-concept version' of Americanism that involved 'materialism without class conflict, secularism without irreverence, democracy without disobedience'.[17] Although modernisation theory was clearly anti-Communist in its political outlook, it rested on a deeper set of assumptions about progress and modernity that in fact overlapped with Marxism. In particular, industrialisation and urbanisation were central to both liberal and Marxist visions of modernity and national development. Furthermore, modernisation theorists acknowledged the modernity of the USSR, though a 'deviant' or 'pathological' version thereof, while hoping that the Soviets would eventually converge with the democratic and capitalist type of modernity exemplified by the United States.

Ultimately, modernisation theory privileged an evolutionary conception of political change and development grounded in a romanticised vision of the history of the United States of America. Early theorists were at least rhetorically committed to democracy, often seeing it as the direct result of economic development and the key to political stability. For example, James Coleman discerned a 'positive relationship between economic development' and competitive, democratic political systems. At the same time, this conception of political development was elitist and technocratic, and even in the 1950s stability was regarded as more important than democracy – an emphasis that would become more pronounced in the 1960s.[18]

The rise of Asian Studies and the emergence of Southeast Asian Studies

In the 1950s and 1960s Asian studies generally and the Association for Asian Studies (AAS) more specifically were strongly influenced by, and played a complementary role in, the wider US-led modernisation project of the Cold War era.[19] World War II had brought a large number of academics into direct contact with the American government, providing the foundation for a wave of institutional growth and expansion that began during the conflict but was facilitated over a much longer period by the Cold War. Political scientists and historians established closer links with the US government during wartime and post-war periods than virtually any other academics except physicists. The linkages emerged in a number of ways, and although not all political scientists and historians participated, the senior members of these professions were very well represented. Many academics took up full-time posts with various government agencies, while others did so on a part-time or irregular basis, and many others at the very least consciously allowed wartime and later Cold War imperatives to influence their work.

17 Gilman, 'Paving the world', p. 7.
18 James S. Coleman, 'The political systems of the developing areas', in *The politics of the developing areas*, ed. Gabriel Almond and James S. Coleman (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960), pp. 537–9. On the question of stability vs democracy, see the introduction of Gilman, 'Paving the world', and Latham, *Modernization as ideology*.
19 Ravi Arvind Palat, 'Fragmented visions: Excavating the future of area studies in a post-American world', *Review: Fernand Braudel Center*, 19, 3 (1996): 269–318.

Meanwhile, the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), the forerunner of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), was one of the best-known postings for political scientists and historians, and one of the most significant for area studies, Asian Studies in particular. W. Norman Brown, who is credited with founding and guiding South Asian Studies in North America after the war, was employed by the OSS, as was John K. Fairbank, who worked as an information officer at the American embassy in Chongqing (Chungking) after the US entered the war. Fairbank went on to become professor of history at Harvard and is regarded as the effective founder of modern Chinese Studies in North America. Shortly after World War II, Brown and Fairbank both wrote influential historical surveys in the American Foreign Policy Library series about US relations with India, Pakistan and China. McGeorge Bundy, one-time president of the Ford Foundation, which provided considerable support for area studies in the 1950s and 1960s through its International Training and Research Program among other initiatives, characterised the OSS as the 'first great center of area studies in the United States'.[20]

At the same time, a number of younger academics were attracted to Asian Studies after having served with the armed forces in the region during the war. This group embarked on their studies generally – or at least their higher degrees – after 1945, at a time when large amounts of money from government and private foundations such as the Ford Foundation increasingly became available with the intention of enhancing the North American understanding of Asia and regions beyond. At the same time, the disciplinary range of area studies grew dramatically as a new generation of academics entered new or revised fields of study that emerged with the expansion and diversification of the social sciences after 1945.[21] This was the context in which Asian Studies was consolidated.

The main North American-based professional organisation for the study of Asia came into existence in 1948 as the Far Eastern Association – centred around the *Far Eastern Quarterly*, which had first appeared in 1941. It became the Association for Asian Studies in 1958, shortly after the publication had changed its name to the *Journal of Asian Studies*. Although the Asian Studies profession increasingly emerged as a result of US Cold War policies, which it tended to complement, a number of important specialists in the field were badly treated by the government in the early 1950s. The reputation of the Institute for Pacific Relations, which had provided an important pre-1945 institutional focus for Asian experts, suffered irreparable damage after the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee concluded that the organisation had been instrumental in the so-called 'loss' of China. The tensions surrounding this debate and the Institute for Pacific Relations controversy complicated the emergence of the AAS in the 1950s. For example,

20 McGeorge Bundy, 'The battlefields of power and the searchlights of the academy', in *Dimensions of diplomacy*, ed. Edgar A. G. Johnson (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1964), pp. 2–3; on the significance of the OSS in this respect, see also McCaughey, *International studies and academic enterprise*, pp. 102–3, 114. Notable examples of the two scholars' work include W. Norman Brown, *The United States and India and Pakistan* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1953) and John King Fairbank, *The United States and China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1948). See also Paul M. Evans, *John Fairbank and the American understanding of modern China˜* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988) and Robin W. Winks, *Cloak and gown: Scholars in the secret war 1939–1961* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), pp. 495–8.
21 Peter J. Seybold, 'The Ford Foundation and the triumph of behavioralism in American political science', in *Philanthropy and cultural imperialism: The foundations at home and abroad*, ed. Robert F. Arnove (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), pp. 269–303.

Fairbank came under scrutiny in the McCarthy years and did not have a particularly good relationship with the State Department until the 1960s; in the early 1950s his services as a State Department consultant were discontinued. In 1951 he was refused a passport by the US government, placing a year-and-a-half delay on a planned trip to Japan, at the same time that he was called to appear before a series of Congressional hearings that scrutinised his loyalty.[22]

In the 1950s a geographically-grounded academic division of labour emerged within the US-centred Asian Studies profession, which was increasingly divided into – and institutionalised as – East Asian, Southeast Asian and South Asian Studies, with the regional groupings being further subdivided into their national components.[23] George Kahin, who as noted above had played a founding role in the Committee on Comparative Politics but parted company with it early on, went on to become a central figure in the creation and consolidation of Southeast Asian Studies. After finishing a Bachelor's degree at Harvard University in 1940, Kahin entered the US Army. During World War II he was part of contingent of paratroopers who were trained for insertion behind enemy lines in the Japanese-controlled Netherlands East Indies. However, by the time US forces under General Douglas MacArthur began rolling back the Japanese empire in Southeast Asia, it had been decided that the erstwhile Dutch colony would not be a direct focus of the campaign. Kahin ended up in Europe instead, but rekindled his interest in Southeast Asia after the war. He received an MA from Stanford University in 1946 and then went on to Johns Hopkins University. He did graduate research in Indonesia during the final period of the Indonesian nationalist movement's struggle against Dutch colonialism in 1948–49. After finishing his Ph.D. in 1951, he took up the post of Assistant Professor of Government and Executive Director of the recently established Southeast Asia Program at Cornell University. Kahin was a driving force in Southeast Asian Studies at Cornell in the 1950s and 1960s, and was Director of the Program between 1961 and 1970. Meanwhile, in 1954 he established the Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, which he ran until his retirement in 1988. In the early 1960s he rose to prominence because of his outspoken opposition to US policy in South Vietnam; he was, for instance, the main speaker at the first National Teach-In in Washington, DC in April 1964.[24]

Kahin played a key role in the 1950s in consolidating Southeast Asian Studies in the North American university system. He edited an influential study of Asian politics generally and another on Southeast Asian politics more specifically, both of which were widely used as textbooks in this period. His classic study, *Nationalism and revolution in Indonesia*, which was based on his doctoral research in Indonesia in the late 1940s, reflected the early optimism about decolonisation, modernisation and nation-building. In the case of Indonesia and the rest of Southeast Asia and beyond, it was hoped – if not

22 Evans, *John Fairbank*, pp. 64, 206–13; see also John N. Thomas, *The Institute of Pacific Relations: Asian scholars and American politics* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1974) and Robert P. Newman, *Owen Lattimore and the 'loss' of China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).
23 The Association for Asian Studies is currently subdivided into four councils: China and Inner Asia, Northeast Asia, South Asia and Southeast Asia.
24 Kahin's posthumous memoirs have been recently published: George McTurnan Kahin, *Southeast Asia: A testament* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003). For his Vietnam scholarship see George McTurnan Kahin and John W. Lewis, *The United States in Vietnam*, (New York: Dial Press, 1967) and Kahin, *Intervention: How America became involved in Vietnam* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1986).

confidently expected – in the 1950s that ethnic loyalties and so-called primordial senti-ments would fade and new loyalties to the modern nation would become the central aspect of every citizen's identity.[25]

The challenge of 'guerrilla communism' in Southeast Asia I: Malaysia

Kahin's work represented a particularly early interest in Southeast Asia after 1945 by a political scientist. By the time his book was published, however, the region was becoming a major arena of the Cold War. Policy-makers in Washington were increas-ingly concerned about the stability of the colonies and/or new nations in the context of the consolidation of the People's Republic of China and the growing significance of 'guerrilla communism' in the region. Kahin questioned such a narrow focus on the part of policy-makers and political scientists alike. However, his concerns had a limited impact, and in the mid-1950s he became *persona non grata* at the US embassy in Jakarta (where the staff were forbidden even to read his book on Indonesian nationalism).[26]

Meanwhile, the challenge of 'guerrilla communism' in Southeast Asia attracted the interest of a growing number of North American political scientists by the 1960s. Signal-ling this shift at the end of the 1950s, Guy Pauker – a founding member of the Committee on Comparative Politics – warned that Southeast Asia was going to be a 'problem area in the next decade'. In the early 1960s Pauker was head of the Asian Section of the Social Science Division at the Rand Corporation and an important figure in what Ron Robin has characterised as the 'military-intellectual complex'.[27] The geostrategic significance of Southeast Asia and the importance of political science to the study of the region are reflected in the disciplinary and regional breakdown of grant recipients from the Foreign Area Fellowship Program (FAFP) funded by the Ford Foundation. The FAFP, which was managed by the SSRC, awarded 2,050 fellowships between 1952 and 1972. As a group, political scientists received 439 of these awards, more than any other discipline, while eight per cent of the fellowships were disbursed for political science research on Southeast Asia.[28]

The rising interest in Southeast Asia in the context of the growing concern with developing areas generally is apparent in the work of Lucian W. Pye, also a founding member of the Committee on Comparative Politics, who emerged as a particularly influ-ential advocate of modernisation theory. Pye, who was born in China in 1921 of mission-ary parents, served as an intelligence officer in the Marine Corps in Asia during World War II. Following the end of the war he did graduate studies in political science at Yale, where he studied with Gabriel Almond. Pye eventually succeeded his mentor as Head of the Committee in 1963, a post he held until it ceased operation in 1972. Pye's work

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25 George McTurnan Kahin, *Nationalism and revolution in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1952). His edited volumes were *Major governments of Asia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1958) and *Governments and politics of Southeast Asia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1959).
26 Kahin, *Southeast Asia: A testament*, pp. 140–5.
27 Guy J. Pauker, 'Southeast Asia as problem area in the next decade', *World Politics*, 11, 3 (1959): 325–45; Ron Robin, *The making of the Cold War enemy: Culture and politics in the military-intellectual complex* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), p. 189.
28 Prior to 1974 political science proposals for the FAFP represented over thirty per cent of all applica-tions, but between 1975–7 they declined dramatically to only six per cent; Simon Philpott, *Rethinking Indonesia: Postcolonial theory, authoritarianism and identity* (London: Macmillan, 2000), p. 115.

combined an explicitly psychological approach to political behaviour with the examination of political change in the emerging nation-states of Asia and Africa. His first book, published in 1956, was *Guerrilla communism in Malaya: Its social and political meaning*. It built on Almond's 1954 work *The appeals of communism*, which was preoccupied with the psychological attraction of communism. Almond had concluded that the communist parties of Western Europe, which were the focus of his study, drew their recruits from members of the population who were 'alienated', 'deviational' or 'psychologically maladjusted'. Under these circumstances the new recruits were attracted to the structure provided by the communist parties primarily as a means to resolve personal identity crises.[29]

Pye's book on the communist insurgency in British Malaya linked Almond's ideas to an explicitly developmental approach that identified late-colonial Malaya as a 'transitional' society. He argued that the fundamental basis of the appeal of communism in Malaya and other underdeveloped nation-states was the insecurity experienced by people who had lost their 'traditional way of life' and were undergoing psychological stress as part of their effort to achieve a 'modern' existence. Pye conducted his fieldwork in Malaya in 1952–3; he interviewed sixty former members of the Malayan Communist Party with the cooperation of the authorities. He concluded that the ethnic Chinese who joined the MCP did so because the organisation represented a 'stable element in their otherwise highly unstable societies', arguing that 'in the structure of the party' the recruits could find 'a closer relationship between effort and reward than anything they have known in either the static old society or the unstable, unpredictable new one'.[30] Harry J. Benda outlined a similar perspective on the appeal of communism when he observed that 'communist movements' in Asia and other parts of the developing world 'provide a substitute for decayed or vanishing institutions'.[31]

Pye's book reinforced the outlook that underpinned the counterinsurgency and nation-building efforts of the colonial government in Malaya (as manifested in the writings of British officials such as Sir Robert Thompson). Like Thompson (who was head of the British Advisory Mission to South Vietnam between 1961 and 1965), Pye's analysis also meshed with the thinking that increasingly underpinned the US modernising and counterinsurgency efforts in South Vietnam in the late 1950s and very early 1960s. According to Pye, if peasants in 'transitional societies' joined guerrilla movements to acquire a modern identity, then the way to defeat the guerrillas was to establish governing institutions that were more effective, more appealing and more modern than those provided by the communists. In November 1963 he presented a paper at a USAID advisory committee meeting arguing that all governments in the new nations confronted profound crises of 'participation' and 'legitimacy'. In order to resolve these crises, he

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29 Gabriel A. Almond, *The appeals of Communism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1954), pp. 380–1; Lucian Pye, *Guerrilla Communism in Malaya: Its social and political meaning* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1956). On the broader context for Pye's scholarship, see Gilman, 'Paving the world', ch. 4. Also see Donald L. M. Blackmer, 'Introduction: An appreciation of Lucian W. Pye,' in *The political culture of foreign area and international studies: Essays in honor of Lucian W. Pye*, ed. Richard J. Samuels and Myron Weiner (Washington: Brassey's, 1992).
30 Lucian Pye, *Guerrilla Communism*, p. 7.
31 Harry J. Benda, 'Reflections on Asian Communism', *The Yale Review*, 56 (1966): 1–16, especially pp. 12–3; Benda, 'Communism in Southeast Asia', *The Yale Review*, 45 (1956): 417–29.

advised that the governments concerned should seek to gain greater control over their citizens by mobilising them for a more active role in national politics.[32]

The 'search for identity' in Southeast Asia: Burma and Indonesia

As Pye's presentation to USAID made clear, he was among those modernisation theorists expressing growing concern by the early 1960s about whether the incipient or recently established nation-states in Asia and Africa would successfully make the transition to modernity. For example, in 1960 he had lamented that the 'transitional societies of Southeast Asia have not fully incorporated the view common to rational-legal systems of authority that the appropriate goal of politics is the production of public policy in the form of laws'. He noted that in Southeast Asia 'power and prestige' were still regularly regarded as 'values to be fully enjoyed for their own sake'.[33]

In 1962 Pye published a major study (supported by CENIS at MIT) entitled *Politics, personality and nation-building: Burma's search for identity*. His book, which focused on the 'problems of building a modern nation-state', used Burma as a case study but drew examples from a wide range of emergent nation-states in Asia and Africa. A central question was why 'transitional societies have such great difficulties in creating an effective modern state system'. At the outset he remonstrated that the 'shocking fact has been that in the last decade the new countries of Asia have had more difficulties with the psychological than with the objective economic problems basic to nation building'. He argued that as colonies in Africa increasingly moved towards decolonisation, it would 'become more apparent' that they, like the new nations of Asia, were 'crucially affected by deep psychological conflicts'. Making clear the concern with order that was central to modernisation theory from the outset, he lamented the apparent lack of 'doctrines on nation building'. The formulation of such a doctrine, he argued, had been 'inhibited primarily' by an 'unreasoned expectation' that democracy was 'inevitable' and by the 'belief that political development is a natural and even automatic phenomenon which cannot be rationally planned or directed'. Pye emphasised the 'need to create more effective, more adaptive, more complex, and more rationalised organisations' to facilitate nation-building. However, the 'heart' of the nation-building 'problem', for him, still centred on the 'interrelationships among personality, culture, and the polity'.[34]

The preoccupation with personality that characterised Pye's work is reflected in his assertion that the 'hope' for 'transitional peoples' rested in their search 'for new collective as well as individual identities'. He was adamant that successful national development depended upon the realisation of a 'greater sense of order' at both the personal and national political levels. Pye offered two broad approaches to make this happen, arguing that for transitional societies to 'advance' they would have to successfully combine both

32 Cited in Latham, *Modernization as ideology*, pp. 176–8. On Robert Thompson, see his *Defeating Communist insurgency: Experiences from Malaya and Vietnam* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1966). Thompson joined the Malayan Civil Service in 1938 and following a number of years in Burma during the Second World War, returned to Malaya, where he worked on security questions. Between 1957–61 he served as Deputy Secretary and then Secretary of Defense in the Federation of Malaya.
33 Lucian W. Pye, 'The Politics of Southeast Asia' in Almond and Coleman ed., *Politics of developing areas*, pp. 142–3.
34 Lucian W. Pye, *Politics, personality and nation-building: Burma's search for identity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962), pp. xv–xvi, 7, 38, 42.

of these. The first involved a 'grand ideological solution' whereby a leader would emerge who, 'out of the depths of his own personal experience', would be 'able to give his people an understanding of the new sentiments and values necessary for national development'. The second lay in 'assisting individuals as individuals', helping them 'to find their sense of identity through the mastery of demanding skills'. In this way national development would be advanced 'as ever increasing numbers of competent people meet in their daily lives the exacting but also psychologically reassuring standards of professional performance basic to the modern world'.[35] These prescriptions clearly reflect the evolutionary and universalised character of modernisation theory, assuming that modernisation is about making a transition from tradition to modernity and that this occurs at the level of individual change under a leadership with the necessary vision.

Pye's work demonstrated the way in which modernisation theorists expected, or at least remained confident, that the correct nation-building strategies would ensure that traditional loyalties, such as ethnic allegiance would fade and new loyalties to the modern nation would become the central element of every citizen's identity. By the beginning of the 1960s a growing number of new nation-states were experiencing instability related to ethnic conflict. For a decade after independence from Britain in 1948 the Burmese state, controlled by the politically dominant Burmans, had been engaged in more or less ongoing warfare with the former colony's ethnic minorities. Most of the insurgencies had wound down by 1958 (only the Karens remained in open rebellion), but it was not clear that they had been resolved – and it became obvious in subsequent decades that they had not. These ethnic conflicts represented what Walker Connor has described as the post-colonial Burmese state's 'most visible and significant barrier to integration'. However, despite the trend toward ethnic insurgency and its significance for Burma in particular, Pye's book avoids the issue, making only one passing reference to the question of minorities in a book of 300 pages. Nor does it figure in his earlier work on Malaya: the 'Chineseness' of the MCP supporters is not seen as particularly relevant. His neglect of ethnic conflict was not particularly unusual for modernisation theorists in this period.[36]

By contrast, Clifford Geertz (who served in the US Navy during World War II before embarking on an academic career) addressed the question of ethnic differences more directly in a 1963 book sponsored by the Committee for the Comparative Study of New Nations at the University of Chicago.[37] Although his analysis reflected an awareness of ethnic differences, in his contribution to the edited volume he tended to treat cultural and religious sentiments as relatively fixed and even 'primordial'. In his chapter on 'The

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35 Ibid., pp. 287–9.
36 Walker Connor, *Ethnonationalism: The quest for understanding* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), pp. 57–9. Burma's ethnic conflicts are discussed in Martin Smith, *Burma: Insurgency and the politics of ethnicity*, 2nd edn (London: Zed Press, 1999), pp. 170–9. On the Karen in Burma see Clive J. Christie, *A modern history of Southeast Asia: Decolonization, nationalism and separatism* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1996).
37 Geertz was a member of the Committee for the Comparative Study of New Nations from 1962–70, serving as Executive Secretary from 1964–6 and Chairman from 1968–70. Other prominent modernisation theorists on the Committee in this period included Lloyd I. Rudolph, who was a member from 1964–72, and Aristide Zolberg, who was a member from 1963–76 and Executive Secretary from 1966–9 and 1973–6. For examples of their scholarship see Lloyd I. Rudolph and Susanne Hoeber Rudolph, 'Generals and politicians in India', in *Garrisons and governments: Politics and the military in new states*, ed. Wilson C. McWilliams (San Francisco: Chandler, 1967) and Aristide Zolberg, *Creating political order: The party-states of West Africa* (New York: Rand McNally, 1965).

integrative revolution', Geertz – an anthropologist by training rather than a political scientist – expressed a significant degree of concern about the chances for success of what he called the 'integrative revolution' underway in the new nations of Asia and Africa. This was represented as a process by which 'primordial' loyalties to region, race, kinship group, custom, religion and language were subsumed into a wider national consciousness.[38]

Geertz's chapter dealt with a range of examples, including Burma, Malaya and Indonesia. Despite the differences among these three erstwhile colonies, he argued that they and other new nations shared a 'common problem – the political normalisation of primordial discontent'. Geertz compared the 'new states' to 'naïve or apprentice painters or poets' finding 'their own proper style'. He then described the 'new states' as 'imitative, poorly organised, eclectic, opportunistic, subject to fads, ill-defined' and 'uncertain'. In the case of Burma, Geertz warned that the government did not have the loyalty of non-Burmans during much of the 1950s and 'if its ethnic enthusiasm is not contained, it may not have [this loyalty] a decade hence either'. Meanwhile, writing at the time of the rebellions in the Outer Islands of Indonesia and the trend towards authoritarianism under Sukarno in the late 1950s and early 1960s, Geertz perceived that country as 'an almost classic case of integrative failure'. He lamented that 'every step toward modernity' had simply strengthened the tendency towards 'an unstable amalgam of military coercion and ideological revivalism'.[39] The increasing perception by the early 1960s that the nation-states in Southeast Asia such as Burma and Indonesia were drifting from the modern democratic path was also apparent in the detailed empirical work of Herbert Feith and Daniel Lev on the latter country. At the same time, their analysis reflected the elitist orientation of modernisation theory and its ahistorical and universalising approach, evaluating the Indonesian trajectory in terms of its inability to recapitulate an idealised version of the North American path to modernity.[40]

While North American social scientists such as Geertz were concerned with the integrative prospects of the new nation of Indonesia, the US government was playing a key role in supporting the rebellions of the late 1950s, as part of its efforts to destabilise the Sukarno regime. The 'loss' of China in 1949 had a powerful impact on the thinking of President Eisenhower and his Secretary of State John Foster Dulles. In particular, they believed the victory of the Chinese revolution flowed in large measure from the Truman administration's preoccupation with maintaining the territorial integrity of China when confronted with the obvious military and political superiority of the communists. This outlook, combined with the assumption that Sukarno's non-aligned policy and alliance with the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) were evidence that he was leading Indonesia into the communist bloc, formed the centrepiece of the Eisenhower administration's approach to a series of rebellions in Indonesia in the late

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38 Clifford Geertz, 'The integrative revolution: Primordial sentiments and civil politics in the new states', in *Old societies and new states: The quest for modernity in Asia and Africa*, ed. Clifford Geertz (London: Macmillan, 1963), pp. 128–31, 139.
39 Ibid., pp. 153–7.
40 Herbert Feith, *The decline of constitutional democracy in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1962); Daniel S. Lev, *The transition to Guided Democracy: Indonesian politics 1957–1959* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1966).

1950s: the *Pemerintahan Revolusioner Republik Indonesia* (Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia-PRRI) in Sumatra and *Piagam Perjuangan Semesta Alam* (Universal Struggle Charter-*Permesta*) in Sulawesi, primarily under the leadership of disgruntled army officers.

The emergence of the PRRI and *Permesta* revolts was driven to a significant degree by the struggle between Left and Right in Indonesia. In particular, the movements were a response to the resurgence of the PKI, which was growing in influence by the late 1950s and increasingly arguing that the national revolution needed to be completed by breaking the nation's ties with imperialism and its dependence on comprador elements. Viewing the rebellions as an opportunity to destabilise and possibly even topple Sukarno's increasingly left-leaning government, Washington provided considerable covert support to the ultimately unsuccessful rebellions. In 1957–8 it initiated a covert CIA-led operation involving the US Navy and elements of the US Air Force which was larger in scale and scope than the much better known (though no more successful) Bay of Pigs operation against Castro's Cuba in the early 1960s. However, these conflicts in Indonesia, while certainly having an ethnic component, were still primarily about reconfiguring the Indonesian nation-state rather than breaking it up (as was the case in Burma, for example). Throughout this period, and in contrast to later years, a strong commitment to national unity survived across the political spectrum in Indonesia.[41]

Decolonisation, the Cold War and nation-building II: 1960–75

The challenge of guerrilla communism in Southeast Asia II: Creating the 'bone structure of a modern nation'

The work on nation-building by Pye, Geertz and other modernisation theorists reflected the growing concern in the 1960s about the future of the new nations. This intersected with an increased emphasis in American foreign policy circles – symbolised by the election of John F. Kennedy, who sought to revitalise and reorient US anti-communist globalism – on the need for a more ambitious nation-building strategy. This involved taking the initiative in Asia (as well as Latin America, the Middle East and Africa) to counter the communist threat via the infusion of increased levels of military and economic aid, advice and support. As already suggested, the country that best encapsulated US nation-building efforts in the early 1960s was South Vietnam. In a keynote address to a conference at West Point on 18 April 1963, attended by Lucian Pye among others, Walt Whitman Rostow declared that the key to winning the guerrilla war in South Vietnam was to 'create at forced-draft the bone structure of a modern nation'.[42] Rostow's career signified the important connection between theories of nation-building, modernisation and national development and US geopolitical strategy after 1945. In the 1950s he was closely associated with CENIS, an important nexus for development economics and modernisation theory that was established at MIT in 1951. MIT had already emerged

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41 The CIA operation is discussed in Audrey R. Kahin and George McT. Kahin, *Subversion as foreign policy: The secret Eisenhower and Dulles debacle in Indonesia* (New York: New Press, 1995), p. 75. There was only one significant revolt by a group that rejected the new state of Indonesia outright: a short-lived movement in 1950 to establish the Republic of the South Moluccas, led primarily by troops from the old Dutch colonial army; Edward Aspinall and Mark T. Berger, 'The breakup of Indonesia? Nationalisms after decolonization and the limits of the nation-state in post-Cold War Southeast Asia', *Third World Quarterly: Journal of Emerging Areas*, 22, 6 (2001): 1006.
42 Quoted in Gilman, 'Paving the world', p. 11.

as the biggest defence contractor of any American university by the end of World War II, a position it occupied (followed closely by Stanford) throughout the Cold War and afterward. Following CENIS's establishment at MIT, it initially focused its research activities, according to Rostow, on the 'study of communist societies and the study of problems of development – economic, social and political'.[43]

Rostow, who served in the research and analysis branch of the OSS during the war, became an advisor to Kennedy (then a Senator) at the end of the 1950s. He went on to be chair of the Policy Planning Staff in the State Department during the Kennedy administration, as well as an advisor to President Johnson during the Vietnam War; he was appointed National Security Advisor in 1966. Meanwhile, Max Millikan, who was on leave from MIT in the late 1940s and early 1950s in order to serve as Assistant Director of Economic Research at the CIA, returned to academia in 1952 to become the director of CENIS, a position he held until his death in 1969.[44]

By the late 1950s CENIS luminaries such as Millikan and Rostow advocated and symbolised the shift in US foreign policy away from containing the Soviet Union with direct military force (at a time when the Soviet Union had begun developing atomic weaponry) and towards taking the initiative in Asia, Africa and Latin America via infusions of economic and military aid as part of an increasingly ambitious set of national development and counter-insurgency programmes. Rostow's *The stages of economic growth: A non-communist manifesto* (1960) encapsulated, more than any other single text, the high modernist and anti-communist approach to nation-building emanating from Washington in the early 1960s. Rostow argued that communism was 'a kind of disease which can befall a transitional society if it fails to organise effectively those elements within it which are prepared to get on the with the job of modernisation'. He called on '[us] of the democratic north' to 'face and deal with the challenge implicit in the stages-of-growth [theory] . . . at the full stretch of our moral commitment, our energy, and our resources'.[45]

Rostow advocated government planning and state intervention to facilitate the movement of a developing nation through his five stages to reach 'take-off'. However, in contrast to some of the more structuralist proponents of development economics, his approach tended to ignore the hierarchical character of the historical and contemporary international political economy. Of course, like virtually all development economists, his approach was ahistorical and technocratic. He took nation-states as natural units of a wider international order, while overlooking the numerous historical changes that

43 Walt Whitman Rostow, 'Development: The political economy of the Marshallian long period', in *Pioneers in development*, ed. Gerald M. Meier and Dudley Seers (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the World Bank, 1984), p. 241. See also Stuart W. Leslie, *The Cold War and American science: The military-industrial-academic complex at MIT and Stanford* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), pp. 11–2. An immediate catalyst for CENIS was provided by Project Troy, which was conducted at MIT at the beginning of the 1950s; Allan Needell, 'Project Troy and the Cold War annexation of the social sciences', in *Universities and empire: Money and politics in the social sciences during the Cold War*, ed. Christopher Simpson (New York: The New Press, 1998), pp. 23–4.
44 Pearce, *Rostow, Kennedy*; on Millikan, see George Rosen, *Western economists and Eastern societies: Agents of change in South Asia, 1950–1970* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), pp. 27–9.
45 Walt Whitman Rostow, *The stages of economic growth: A non-Communist manifesto* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1960), pp. 162–7. The broader context of the book is discussed in Lawrence Freedman, *Kennedy's wars: Berlin, Cuba, Laos and Vietnam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 27–31.

distinguished the industrialisation of emergent nation-states in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries from developing nations of the twentieth.

By the time *The stages of economic growth* was published, Rostow and Millikan were serving as advisors to Senator Kennedy. In January 1960, the US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations (of which Kennedy was a member) received a report it had commissioned from CENIS entitled 'Economic, social and political change in the underdeveloped countries and its implications for United States policy'. The authors expounded the CENIS perspective on the importance of the developing nations for US foreign policy. The report's main recommendations were that American foreign economic aid should be disbursed on a 'long-term' and 'unlinked' basis following clear economic criteria. Technical assistance, particularly in agriculture, needed to continue and land reform needed to be promoted. It emphasised that the US needed to coordinate the distribution of aid with other donor governments in the developed world and that a corps of development professionals should be established. Aid for particular capital-intensive projects, it was argued, should be increased and spread over a number of projects to facilitate a 'big push' in the developing nations. A revised and expanded version of the report was published in 1961; it was edited by Millikan and Donald Blackmer, and included chapters by Rostow and Pye, among others.[46]

The challenge of 'guerrilla communism' in Southeast Asia III: South Vietnam

Nowhere did the Kennedy administration focus more energy on the challenge of guerrilla communism than in South Vietnam, where the US-backed nation-building initiative entered a new phase with the end of the Eisenhower presidency. This new phase also flowed in significant measure from changes to the situation in South Vietnam itself by the end of the 1950s. Following the Geneva Conference in 1954, which temporarily partitioned Vietnam, the communist-led Viet Minh had withdrawn militarily to the North, but a large number of its members and supporters continued to live in the South. In 1959, in part as a result of growing pressure from Southern members, the Party leadership in Hanoi took the decision to support armed struggle in South Vietnam. In December 1960 the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam (NLF), a popular front organisation modelled on the Viet Minh, was established to spearhead the guerrilla war; the fighting between the NLF and the South Vietnamese regime increased steadily over the following year.[47]

In response, the Strategic Hamlet Program became the 'centerpiece' of Washington's policy towards South Vietnam in 1962–3. Drawing on the experience of previous French colonial initiatives, earlier efforts by the regime of Ngo Dinh Diem (1955–63), as well as British counter-insurgency programmes in Malaya in the 1950s, the Kennedy Administration encouraged and facilitated the removal of peasants from widely dispersed villages, placing them in concentrated settlements which could be controlled more directly by the government in Saigon. Washington's commitment to this programme was apparent in the fact that the State Department scheduled almost $90 million to be spent

46 *The emerging nations: Their growth and United States policy*, ed. Max F. Millikan and Donald L. M. Blackmer (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1961); Gilman, 'Paving the world', Ch. 4, discusses the CENIS paper.
47 Carlyle Thayer, *War by other means: National liberation and revolution in Vietnam, 1954–60* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1989); Gabriel Kolko, *Anatomy of a war: Vietnam, the United States and modern historical experience*, 2nd edn (New York: New Press, 1994), pp. 80–108.

on Strategic Hamlet programmes for fiscal year 1963. Using this strategy, the US Military Assistance Command (MACV) and USAID sought to block – or at least seriously weaken – the NLF's ability to get intelligence, food and other supplies, as well as recruits from the Southern population. They also sought to inculcate new ideas about national citizenship that were centred on loyalty to the government of South Vietnam.

In 1962 it initially appeared as if the Strategic Hamlets were undermining the influence of the NLF; however, the guerrillas acted rapidly and effectively to counter this trend. The NLF promised the peasants – many of whom were, not surprisingly, hostile to resettlement, the forced labour demands and other coercive aspects of the US-backed programme – that following the revolution they would be allowed to return to their old villages. It also intensified military attacks on and recruitment in the hamlets. In a wider sense, however, the Strategic Hamlet Program failed because US officials and advisors were unable or unwilling to examine the ideas on which it rested. The assumption that rural practices and values could be eradicated, or at least revised, to fit anti-communist modernising and nation-building goals remained entrenched as the war deepened. After the overthrow and assassination of Diem and his brother Ngo Dinh Nhu in a military coup in November 1963, the term 'strategic hamlet' was excised from counterinsurgency discourse, but subsequent efforts to resettle and control the rural population did little but rework the basic modernisation framework that underpinned the failed programme of 1962–3.[48]

After the end of the Diem regime, the Strategic Hamlet Program's successors were increasingly overshadowed by full-scale warfare. The US had hoped that Diem's overthrow would improve the stability of South Vietnam; however, the deterioration in the military situation following the coup paved the way for the escalation of US involvement and direct military intervention by 1965. This led in turn to immense human, material and environmental destruction, but failed to solve the fundamental political problems of the Saigon regime and the fragile nation-state of South Vietnam. The pervasive economic, military and political reliance on the US generated growing possibilities for governmental and private corruption that completely shredded the South Vietnamese government's nationalist credentials. The war became a business opportunity for many members of the wealthy and well-connected elite in Saigon. While a significant number of people in the South were hostile to the communists, they also lost interest in fighting for the increasingly corrupt and despotic US-backed regime in Saigon. Furthermore, in the effort to build a modern nation-state in the southern half of Vietnam, US policymakers overlooked the fact that many Southerners identified with the culturally and historically delineated nation of Vietnam that was larger than the post-1954 polity presided over by Diem and his successors.[49]

Military modernisation theory and nation-building I: Reorientation and revision

A continued commitment to the search for theories of modernisation and strategies of nation-building with universal relevance was apparent in the work of a number of modernisation theorists in the 1960s and 1970s. Observers have frequently argued that the war in Vietnam provided the backdrop for the consolidation of what is sometimes

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48 Latham, *Modernization as ideology*, pp. 153–4, 180–2, 197–8, 203–4. For a broader and more sympathetic assessment see Richard A. Hunt, *Pacification: The American struggle for Vietnam's hearts and minds* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1995).

49 Latham, *Modernization as ideology*, p. 161; Kolko, *Anatomy of a war*, pp. 111–25, 208–30, 654–7.

called the politics-of-order approach, or military modernisation theory. In particular, it is often held that as a result of an increasing number of challenges to US nation-building efforts, the creation of institutions and organisations that could provide order became the key issue for modernisation theorists during the 1960s. In the context of the prominent role of the military in politics in Asia and beyond this led to growing interest in the 'military as a modernising force'.[50]

Guy Pauker, in his well-known 1959 article that sought to direct attention to Southeast Asia, warned against the 'liberal tradition' of the United States which made 'it repugnant to contemplate regimes controlled by military elements'.[51] By 1962 his views had become more explicit in their emphasis on a military solution, rejecting psychological theories of nation-building and the preoccupation with winning 'hearts and minds' that was ostensibly the key to 'constructive counterinsurgency' at the time. At a conference on 'The US Army's Limited War Mission and Social Science Research' held at American University in Washington in mid-1962, Pauker told those in attendance about new research at the Rand Corporation that challenged the prevailing emphasis on social and economic reformism and psychological approaches in Cold War counterinsurgency campaigns in Southeast Asia and beyond.[52]

While Pauker's views were out of step with the presentations of the other participants in the conference, the shift in emphasis from 'constructive counterinsurgency' to 'coercive counterinsurgency' that was being advocated by the social science division at the Rand Corporation eventually became the 'intellectual prop' for direct intervention in South Vietnam by the Johnson administration after 1965. As the 1960s unfolded, the US government, with the support of policy intellectuals based at or affiliated with the Rand Corporation along with other modernisation theorists, was increasingly formulating and/or acting on what some observers have called 'military modernisation theory'.[53] As the decade progressed, proponents of the modernising role of the military in Asia and elsewhere increasingly emphasised the importance of cultivating military officers and pointed to the central role the military as an organisation could play in nation-building and the provision of order.[54]

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50 Henry Bienen, 'The background to contemporary study of militaries and modernization', in *The military and modernization*, ed. Henry Bienen (Chicago: Aldine Atherton, 1971), p. 7. For one such analysis, see Donal Cruise O'Brien, 'Modernization, order, and the erosion of a democratic ideal: American political science 1960–1970', in *Development theory: Four critical essays*, ed. David Lehmann (London: Frank Cass, 1979), p. 50.

51 Pauker, 'Southeast Asia as problem area', p. 343.

52 Robin, *Making of the Cold War enemy*, pp. 189–90.

53 Gabriel Kolko, *Confronting the Third World: United States foreign policy 1945–1980* (New York: Pantheon, 1988), pp. 132–4; the shift in counterinsurgency perspective is discussed in Robin, *Making of the Cold War enemy*, pp. 189–90, 196.

54 For example, see William Gutteridge, *Armed forces in the new states* (London: Oxford University Press, 1962); *The role of the military in underdeveloped countries*, ed. John J. Johnson (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962); Morris Janowitz, *The military in the political development of new nations: An essay in comparative analysis* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964); William Gutteridge, *Military institutions and power in the new states* (New York: Praeger, 1965); and Guy J. Pauker, 'Indonesia: The age of reason?', *Asian Survey*, 8, 2 (1968): 133–47. Also see an article by the former US ambassador to Indonesia, who enthused that the 'greatest encouragement for the future' of Indonesia 'remains the character and intelligence of the leaders of the New Order'; John M. Allison, 'Indonesia: Year of the pragmatists', *Asian Survey*, 9, 2 (1969): 137. A year later Allison was less optimistic but still very supportive in his 'Indonesia: The end of the beginning?', *Asian Survey*, 10, 2 (1970): 143–51.

Samuel Huntington is generally seen as one of the most prominent exponents of the shift from classical modernisation theory, with its psychological orientation and its apparent emphasis on democracy, to the politics-of-order and military modernisation theory. A major figure in North American political science, Huntington began his career as an undergraduate at Yale in the 1940s. He completed an MA at the University of Chicago and then did his Ph.D. at Harvard, where he remained as a member of the staff. In the 1950s and 1960s he acted in various consultant and advisory capacities to the US government and to the Democratic Party. In the 1970s he developed close links with the Trilateral Commission. (Founded in 1973 by prominent North American, European and Japanese academics, politicians and corporate heads, the Commission had as its major objective to develop a cohesive and semi-permanent alliance embracing the world's major capitalist-industrial democracies in order to better promote stability and protect their interests.) He was on the Trilateral Task Force on the Governability of Democracies and authored the section on the United States in the well-known Task Force report, *The crisis of democracy*. Huntington served on the National Security Council during the Carter administration, resigning in August 1978 to become the Director of the Center for International Affairs at Harvard University.[55]

In the 1950s and early 1960s Huntington wrote about the military in politics. His reputation as a theorist of political development and modernisation (a reputation that had first been established with *The soldier and the state*) was consolidated with *Political order in changing societies*, which first appeared in 1968.[56] The book was exceedingly influential. However, as Paul Cammack and Irene L. Gendzier have argued, it was not as dramatic a departure from earlier trends in modernisation theory as either Huntington or many other observers have suggested. Many of its main ideas and propositions are to be found in earlier books. What Huntington did, however, was to synthesise this earlier work while focusing on predicting what might or might not be necessary to ensure continued political order and social stability.[57]

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55 Samuel Huntington *et al.*, *The crisis of democracy: Report on the governability of democracies to the Trilateral Commission* (New York: New York University Press, 1975). For biographical background and a brief discussion of Huntington's main works, see Robert D. Kaplan, 'Looking the world in the eye', *Atlantic Monthly*, 288, 5 (2001): 68–82. Other discussion can be found in Colin Leys, 'Samuel Huntington and the end of classical modernization theory', in *Introduction to the sociology of 'developing societies'*, ed. Hamza Alavi and Teodor Shanin (London: Macmillan, 1983), pp. 332–49; Vicky Randall and Robin Theobald, *Political change and underdevelopment: A critical introduction to Third World politics* (London: Macmillan, 1985), pp. 67–98; Mark T. Berger, *Under Northern eyes: Latin American Studies and US hegemony in the Americas 1898–1990* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), pp. 129–30; and Stephen Gill, *American hegemony and the Trilateral Commission* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).
56 Samuel Huntington, *Political order in changing societies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968); Huntington, *The soldier and the state: The theory and politics of civil-military relations* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957); *Changing patterns of military politics*, ed. Samuel Huntington (New York: Free Press, 1962).
57 Cammack, *Capitalism and democracy*, pp. 2, 36–7, 52–4; Gendzier, *Managing political change*, pp. 42–7. The argument of Huntington's 1968 book was foreshadowed in his 'Political development and political decay', *World Politics*, 17, 3 (1965): 386–430. A survey of university and college instructors in North America in the early 1970s reported that almost 60 per cent of the academics surveyed regarded *Political order in changing societies* as the 'most important' book on political development and modernisation theory; Henry C. Kenski and Margaret Gorgan Kenski, *Teaching political development and modernization at American universities: A survey* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1974), pp. 9–10.

Huntington held up political order as the ultimate goal of any society. In an implicit critique of development economics and Cold War policy-makers he argued that contrary to earlier expectations, the instability in Asia and the rest of the Third World since World War II was primarily the result of 'rapid social change and the rapid mobilisation of new groups into politics coupled with the slow development of political institutions'. In his view, US foreign policy since 1945 had missed this point, because Washington had focused on the 'economic gap' and ignored the 'political gap' because of the assumption in North America that political stability flowed from 'social reform' stimulated by economic development. He argued that it was actually the process of modernisation that resulted in political instability. For Huntington organisation was the 'road to political power' as well as the 'foundation of political stability'. While the 'vacuum of power and authority' which was seen to exist in 'so many modernising countries may be filled temporarily by charismatic leadership or by military force', he contended that it could only 'be filled permanently' by 'political organisation'.[58]

Much of Huntington's emphasis can already be discerned in the writing of earlier modernisation theorists such as Pye and Almond. For example, as we have seen, a concern about the neglect of the political side of development along with an emphasis on building institutions and creating organisations were present in Pye's book on Burma, which Huntington cited approvingly in relation to his discussion of the need for building political organisations. At the same time, despite growing evidence to the contrary, the assumption that economic development produced political stability continued to prevail in US government circles into the mid-1960s. In fact, Huntington directly challenged Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara's articulation of this view in 1966.[59] As Huntington's criticisms of McNamara's views on the causal link between poverty and instability suggest, there was a connection between Huntington's conclusions in *Political order in changing societies* and his work for the government in the second half of the 1960s. From 1966–9 he was chairman of the Council on Vietnamese Studies of USAID's South East Asian Advisory Group. In 1967 he spent time in South Vietnam, after which he wrote an article that explained the communist success there in terms of the NLF's 'ability to impose authority in rural areas where authority was lacking'. In his view – and this was a major theme of his book as well – the appeal of communism in South Vietnam stemmed not from material poverty, but from 'political deprivation', that is, the lack of an 'effective structure of authority'. In Huntington's estimation, and in contrast to earlier writers on the subject, the rural areas could not be retaken from the communists; in the three years between 1965 and 1968 approximately 3 million Vietnamese had already fled to the urban areas, especially Saigon. In South Vietnam and elsewhere the key to combating wars of national liberation, according to Huntington, was to adopt a policy of 'forced-draft urbanisation' and 'modernisation', which would quickly shift the nation-state in question beyond the stage where a rural-based revolution had any chance of building up enough support to capture national political power.[60]

58 Huntington, *Political order in changing societies*, pp. vii, 4–5, 461.
59 Ibid., pp. 30–1 (Pye), 40–1 (McNamara).
60 Samuel P. Huntington, 'The bases of accommodation', *Foreign Affairs*, 46, 3 (1968): 644. See also Huntington, 'Social science and Vietnam', *Asian Survey*, 7, 8 (1967): 503–6. Leys, 'Samuel Huntington', has a good discussion of Huntington's work and the Vietnam War.

The draconian prescriptions of Huntington and other modernisation theorists who viewed order as the primary objective held out the possibility that successful nation-building in South Vietnam and elsewhere remained within Washington's power. However, with the Tet Offensive in early 1968 any idea that US power could turn South Vietnam into a viable capitalist nation-state and achieve military victory against the North disappeared. For the architects of the US war in Vietnam, the Tet Offensive represented what Gabriel Kolko has described as 'a long-postponed confrontation with reality'.[61] Against the backdrop of the failing American effort to turn South Vietnam into a Southeast Asian version of South Korea or Taiwan (which in Cold War terms were superficially similar but had very different histories), Huntington's book represented an important reorientation and revision of modernisation theory. It also represented an inability or unwillingness to probe the deeper assumptions on which the US-led modernisation project rested. *Political order in changing societies* highlighted the close connection between political science and the 'policy concerns of the day'. The assumptions and concerns of the officials who carried the US into full-scale war in Vietnam were closely connected to the theories of modernisation that emerged in the 1950s and 1960s.[62]

Despite revisions, modernisation theory continued to be constrained by the way in which change was conceptualised as a process in terms of a very limited number of paths towards capitalist modernity. This outlook was grounded implicitly, and often explicitly, in romanticised visions of the history of North America and Western Europe (especially the US and Great Britain). The naturalisation of the nation also meshed with and reinforced the wider organic metaphors that had come to underpin a great deal of work on modernisation. Organic and evolutionary conceptions of development glossed over the uneven and destructive aspects of capitalist development. Meanwhile, the use of economic and political models with little regard to questions of time and place facilitated the consolidation between the 1940s and the 1970s of a shifting but consistently technocratic and elitist approach to modernisation and national development that universalised nation-building lessons based on selective readings of particular cases of nation-state formation, crisis and/or consolidation. As we will see, however, the Committee on Comparative Politics would not survive the 1970s; part of its undoing flowed from an internal challenge to its pretensions to provide a universal theory of modernisation.

Military modernisation theory and nation-building II: Diversification and decline

By the 1970s the elaboration of military modernisation theory and the politics-of-order approach was part of a much wider process of diversification and decline in modernisation theory as various new radical and moderate theoretical challengers emerged. This process included the emergence of the concept of bureaucratic authoritarianism. Associated initially with the work of Guillermo A. O'Donnell, this theory had gained some prominence by the 1970s. O'Donnell argued that in late-industrialising

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61 Kolko, *Anatomy of a war*, p. 334.
62 D. Michael Shafer, *Deadly paradigms: The failure of US counterinsurgency policy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), p. 12, comments on the connection between political science and policy-making; see also Gilman, 'Paving the world', Introduction. The Vietnam War has been the subject of a massive amount of historical scholarship, including considerable evaluation of the assumptions that underpinned US policy in that era. On this immense literature see Robert J. McMahon, 'US-Vietnamese relations: A historiographical survey' in *Pacific passage: The study of American-East Asian relations on the eve of the twenty-first century*, ed. Warren I. Cohen (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), pp. 313–36.

nation-states economic development intersected with the end of democracy and greater, rather than less, inequality. His approach drew on Weberian sociology, Marxism and corporatist concepts. More specifically, he built critically on Huntington's approach and on the early historical critique of modernisation theory articulated by Barrington Moore. Central to O'Donnell's analysis was the argument that a bureaucratic-authoritarian state emerged when the limits of import-substitution industrialisation were reached. At this point the alliance which had been forged between the working class and the national bourgeoisie broke down and the latter moved to form an alliance with the military and the technocracy. resulting in bureaucratic-authoritarianism. A central characteristic of a bureaucratic-authoritarian regime, as defined by O'Donnell, was that it was an attempt by the bourgeoisie, linked to transnational capital, to protect their interests and guide the economy in a direction commensurate with their needs.[63]

By the second half of the 1970s, the more deterministic elements of the theory of bureaucratic-authoritarianism were being increasingly challenged (even by O'Donnell himself), at the same time as it was being used as a relatively open conceptual framework that provided a guide for research more than a verifiable theory. The concept of bureaucratic-authoritarianism represented a particularly critical revision of modernisation theory that went much further than Huntington in the way it incorporated insights from Marxist and Marxist-derived theories. Although its primary impact was on Latin American Studies, bureaucratic-authoritarianism had a broad influence on the study of modernisation and political development. It played a role in, or was connected to, the shift in political science towards 'bringing the state back in', a shift that had important implications for the analysis of political and economic change in Northeast and Southeast Asia.[64]

63 Guillermo A. O'Donnell, *Modernization and bureaucratic-authoritarianism: Studies in South American politics* (Berkeley: University of California Institute of International Studies, 1973); O'Donnell, 'Modernization and military coups: Theory, comparisons and the Argentine case', in *Armies and politics in Latin America*, ed. Abraham F. Lowenthal (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1976), pp. 96–133; O'Donnell, 'Corporatism and the question of the state', in *Authoritarianism and corporatism in Latin America*, ed. James M. Malloy (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977), pp. 47–88; O'Donnell, 'Reflections on the patterns of change in the bureaucratic-authoritarian state', *Latin American Research Review*, 13, 1 (1978): 3–38; O'Donnell, 'Tensions in the bureaucratic-authoritarian state and the question of democracy', in *The new authoritarianism in Latin America*, ed. David Collier (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), pp. 285–318; and O'Donnell, *Bureaucratic-authoritarianism: Argentina 1966–1973 in comparative perspective* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988). Barrington Moore Jr.'s arguments are found in his *Social origins of dictatorship and democracy: Lord and peasant in the making of the modern world* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966).
64 Dwight Y. King, 'Indonesia's New Order as a bureaucratic polity, a neopatrimonial regime, or a bureaucratic-authoritarian regime: What difference does it make?', in *Interpreting Indonesian politics: Thirteen contributions to the debate*, ed. Benedict Anderson and Audrey Kahin (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1982), pp. 104–16; Fermin D. Adriano, 'A critique of the bureaucratic authoritarian state thesis: The case of the Philippines', *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, 14, 4 (1984): 459–84; Arief Budiman, 'The state and industrialisation in Indonesia', in *Dependency issues in Korean development*, ed. Kim Kyong-Dong (Seoul: National University Press, 1987); Stephan Haggard, *Pathways from the periphery: The politics of growth in the Newly Industrializing Countries* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), pp. 254–70. For critiques of the theory, see David Collier, 'The bureaucratic-authoritarian model: Synthesis and priorities for future research', in *The new authoritarianism in Latin America*, ed. David Collier (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), pp. 363–97; and Karen L. Remmer and Gilbert W. Merkx, 'Bureaucratic-authoritarianism revisited', *Latin American Research Review*, 17, 2 (1982): 3–40.

The shift towards 'bringing the state back in' followed from the diversification of modernisation theory generally and the decline of the Committee on Comparative Politics more specifically. These changes were apparent in Charles Tilly's influential project on state formation in Western Europe, which was sponsored by the Committee.[65] This project flowed from the Committee's hope that Western European examples could be used to 'test and refine' the theories of modernisation and political development they had generated in relation to the developing world. The Committee was also concerned that the study of European politics was steadily declining in significance as part of the sub-discipline of comparative politics. The proposed project on Europe was at least partially an attempt to rejuvenate European political studies via its inclusion in the study of political development in the non-European world.

Tilly's study was a disappointment for Lucian Pye, who was by this point Chair of the Committee, particularly because of its failure to provide sustenance for the universalising and ahistorical approach that was the hallmark of political development theory. The book crystallised the tension between political science and history in relation to the study of state formation and nation-building – a tension centred on the universal versus the particular. At the same time, its emphasis on the role of conflict and violence in state formation and in the emergence of nation-states in Europe represented a critique of the evolutionary and organic conception of social change central to modernisation theory generally and political development theory more specifically. By the time Tilly's project got under way, the field of political development theory was breaking down. In fact, the Committee on Comparative Politics was wound up in 1972, while *The formation of national states in Western Europe* was only published three years later. Ultimately his study symbolised the growing interest in North American social science in the 1970s in state-centred approaches to political change. This shift was formalised with the formation in 1983 of the SSRC's Committee on States and Social Structures, which sponsored an edited volume entitled *Bringing the state back in*.[66]

The publication of Tilly's book coincided with the fall of Saigon, by which time Southeast Asian Studies in general had declined in significance in North America. However, it was specific disciplines within Southeast Asian Studies, such as political science, that were the most dramatically affected. The important position of political scientists as

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65 *The formation of national states in Western Europe*, ed. Charles Tilly (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975).

66 Theda Skocpol, 'Bringing the state back in: Strategies of analysis in current research', in *Bringing the state back in*, ed. Peter B. Evans *et al.* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 3–43. For other discussions, see Steven Heydemann, 'War, institutions, and social change in the Middle East', in *War, institutions, and social change in the Middle East*, ed. Steven Heydemann (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), pp. 5–7, 28–9. Of course, other important revisions of modernisation theory were also more historically grounded and challenged the tradition-modernity dichotomy and earlier assumptions about unilinear cultural transformation, emphasising the persistence of traditional institutions and outlooks and the historical specificity of political cultures. This approach argued that modernisation was not simply about the transition from tradition to modernity, but involved the modernising and adapting of tradition, and that all 'modern' societies are a mix of the 'traditional' and the 'modern'. See, for example, Lloyd I. Rudolph and Susanne Hoeber Rudolph, *The modernity of tradition: Political development in India* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967); Barbara Geddes, 'Paradigms and sand castles in comparative politics of developing areas', in *Comparative politics, policy, and international relations (Political science: Looking to the future, vol. two)*, ed. William Crotty (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1991), p. 49.

recipients of the SSRC's FAFP grants has already been mentioned. Between 1962 and 1964 political science applications for work on Southeast Asia were by far the most numerous to be received by the FAFP, and as US involvement in Vietnam deepened, political science proposals represented at least 50 per cent of all applications. Between 1968 and 1970 political science applications remained as numerous as in the previous three-year period; subsequently, however, proposals from anthropologists overtook those from political scientists. Political science applications to the FAFP for support for work on Southeast Asia then descended to a historically low level in 1974–6.[67]

The relative retreat of North American political scientists from Southeast Asia by the end of the Vietnam War points to the way in which US failure in Vietnam led to the redirection of the modernising expectations of political scientists. In effect, for practitioners of modernisation theory it was not the theory itself that was seen to have failed, but South Vietnam specifically, and even Southeast Asia more generally. Instead of exploring the reasons for that failure, political scientists turned their attention elsewhere, either geographically or thematically. By the late 1970s, the Newly Industrialising Countries (NICs) of East Asia, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore were attracting growing interest. By the 1980s the economic success of Thailand and Malaysia (and latterly Indonesia and coastal China) was being studied and celebrated by key modernisation theorists such as Lucian Pye, often via revised theories of modernisation. With the end of the Cold War, Vietnam has also been increasingly seen as having finally discovered the path to capitalist modernity.[68]

Conclusion

In the 1950s modernisation theory emerged as the most significant conceptual trend in political science and area studies. This article has examined the history of that theory from the 1940s to the 1970s with a focus on Southeast Asia, emphasising the way in which decolonisation, the Cold War, nation-building and the growing power of the US were central to the consolidation of the modern idea of political and economic development. While modernisation and political development theory played an important role in the formalisation of the study of Southeast Asia in this period, the dramatic transitions from colonies to nation-states in that region and the deepening war in what had been French Indochina were in turn pivotal to the rise and transformation of modernisation theory. At the same time, a central contradiction of modernisation theory, and of the wider US-sponsored modernisation project, was the way in which they uncritically took the nation-state as the key unit of analysis.

The Cold War profoundly conditioned, but was also contingent upon, the world-historical process of decolonisation and the universalisation of the nation-state system. This ensured that theories of modernisation and political development and approaches to nation-building had important connections with the colonial period, but were also characterised by important new ideas and practices centred on the universalisation of

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67 Philpott, *Rethinking Indonesia*, pp. 115–17.
68 Gerard Greenfield, 'Fragmented visions of Asia's next tiger: Vietnam and the Pacific Century', in *The rise of East Asia: Critical visions of the Pacific Century*, ed. Mark T. Berger and Douglas A. Borer (London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 124–47. Lucian Pye's *Asian power and politics: The cultural dimensions of authority* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985) appeared ten years after the fall of Saigon.

the nation-state system. US and Soviet globalism in the Cold War era was increasingly pursued in a world of ostensibly sovereign nation-states, and the theories of modernisation and political development that emerged and were revised were more distinct from earlier colonial and imperial ideas about progress than is often argued. The shift from colonial theories of progress to Cold War theories of nation-building and national development was far more important than the subsequent reorientation of modernisation theory in the 1960s from an emphasis on democracy to political order. At the same time, the waning of psychological theories of political development in the 1960s reflected the fact that theories of modernisation would continue to be subject to revision in the context of the wider dynamics of the Cold War and the nation-state system.