

Dialogical History and the History of a Dialogue: Three Visions of The
Committee for the Comparative Study of New Nations at the University of Chicago

Bijan Warner
University of Chicago
bijanwarner@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

The Committee for the Comparative Study of New Nations (CCSNN) was a forum at the University of Chicago for interdisciplinary dialogue on a loosely related set of theoretical and empirical questions in the social sciences. Although the CCSNN played an important role in the intellectual development of many prominent scholars, its role in the history of the social sciences has been largely forgotten. Drawing on archival research and interviews with its members, I seek to evaluate how different models of history influence our understanding of the CCSNN. To this end, I organize this paper around three questions: 1) What was the CCSNN and why was it influential in the intellectual lives of its members? 2) How was it created? and 3) Why has it been largely forgotten from disciplinary self-histories? In answering these questions, I distinguish three visions of the history of the social sciences: “whig” history, sociological reductionism, and dialogical history. Whereas the first two approach texts as purely semantic statements, the third views texts as utterances that can only be understood contextually—a text’s semantic aspects cannot be divorced from its pragmatic aspects. I argue that the most important feature of the CCSNN was its ability to foster dialogue across disciplines, theories, and areas; accordingly, only a dialogical history is capable of representing dialogue at the CCSNN.

What is the purpose of the history of the social sciences, if it is to be more than just a collection of facts of interest to a subset of social scientists? Robin Collingwood has argued that the purpose of history in general is human self-knowledge: history “teaches us what man [sic] has done and thus what man is” (1946:10). If we apply this statement to the social sciences, the value of its history is that it teaches us, better than any theoretical treatise, what the social sciences are and how they proceed. In this essay, I compose a history of the Committee for the Comparative Study of New Nations (CCSNN), an interdisciplinary research group at the University of Chicago from 1960 to 1975. My objective is to identify the qualities of this group that make it an exemplary model for how to conduct social science inquiry. However, in order to identify these qualities of the CCSNN, an adequate method of history is required. I argue that, in contrast with many conventional approaches to the history of the social sciences, only a *dialogical history* is capable of providing such an understanding of the CCSNN. The most valuable characteristic of the CCSNN was its capacity to stimulate dialogue among its members, leading to engaged research and innovation.¹ The history of a dialogue requires a method capable of representing dialogue.

¹ A cursory overview of the personnel list (Figure 1) reveals several highly influential social scientists. Most prominently, Clifford Geertz compiled a set of essays he wrote while a member of the CCSNN, packaged with an

Although Collingwood argues that the purpose of history is self-knowledge, many scholars have conducted the history of the social sciences for other reasons. Of the numerous causes for inquiry into the history of the social sciences, two demand particular attention for their ubiquity and effects on how we understand the past. The first arises in the normal conduct of social science research: in this approach, the ideas of the past are selected and represented according to their ability to frame the problems and ideas of the present.² To the extent that social scientists view their work as cumulative, the theory of history they develop is teleological, and can be called a form of “whig” history; that is, history from the viewpoint of its victors (Stocking, 1968).³ Such histories tend to be “internal” in their examination of the statements of past social scientists. Furthermore, the purpose of history in this approach is to better understand the advantages of the present, making the case for a particular way of conducting future research.

Against this vision of history that is produced by ongoing social science research, some sociologists have explicitly attended to the environment in which social science research takes place in order to understand particular outcomes. This second approach tends to take an “external” stance to the texts of social science, paying less attention to the *content* of statements than their *social context*. Furthermore, while the first approach is “Whiggish” in its partisanship, this second approach attempts to treat texts from the perspective of the objective, or at the very least impartial, social scientist. This approach relies on a structural or causal vision of historical process, as opposed to the teleological vision

introductory essay, and published in 1973 as *The Interpretation of Cultures*: in the ISI Web of Science, this volume has received nearly 7,800 citations in journals alone. We can also cite Marc Galanter’s innovations in the subfield of law and society, Susanne and Lloyd Rudolph’s contributions to political science, and Nur Yalman’s structural anthropology as a few prominent examples of innovations that members developed during or after their engagement in discussions at the CCSNN.

² I apply the term “whig history” to a general convention in the genre of social science writing; it is thus not limited to any particular intellectual movement. As David Hollinger has noted about disciplinary self-histories, such “self-contained narratives of a discipline’s past emphasize the analytical power of the specific, creative works that have shaped the discipline, and pay little attention to whatever extradisciplinary engagements may have helped to inspire these acts of creativity.” (1996. Cited in Backhouse and Fontaine, 2010).

³ Herbert Butterfield (1931) coined the term to describe history in general, but Stocking has persuasively argued that we understand its effects in the history of the social sciences.

of the first approach. Finally, the purpose of history in this second approach is to serve as a source of data against which sociological theories can be tested. I will refer to this tendency in the history of the social sciences as *sociological reductionism*: the content of a statement is reduced to being an expression of an underlying sociological force or process, and its success is similarly explained.⁴

Despite their opposition to each other, these two camps suffer from the same theoretical error: both treat the texts of social scientists as purely semantic statements which can be divorced from their context and analyzed discretely. In the terminology of Mikhail Bakhtin, this is a *monologic* representation of texts.⁵ From this monologic treatment, the former camp proceeds to demonstrate how the statements of the past were inadequate, and thus superseded by the present “prevailing point of view” (Volosinov 1929:159), whereas the latter camp proceeds by “explaining” the cause of the statement (whether or not it is true), by reference to a small selection of its context, reified as having causal force.⁶ In either case, the semantic content of a text is first divorced from its context prior to its analysis.⁷

The inadequacies of these two forms of history become apparent when we apply them to an object that evades monologic representation: such an object arises when we attempt to define the CCSNN. A cursory glance of the list of members of the CCSNN (Figure 1) raises an immediate question:

⁴ Bakhtin’s name for this is *vulgar sociological explanation*, or: “The elucidation of a text not by means of other texts (contexts) but with extratextual thinglike (reified) reality.” (1986:162). I have avoided his term because it is perhaps too incendiary for my sociologist colleagues. Instead, I have adopted “sociological reductionism,” which recalls Bellah’s (1970) concept of *symbolic reductionism* to discuss the tendency to explain a complex symbolic system (in his case, religion) as the expression of an underlying sociological cause.

⁵ I rely on Bakhtin’s distinction between monologic and dialogic genres and forms of knowledge: “The exact sciences constitute a monologic form of knowledge: the intellect contemplates a thing and expounds upon it. There is only one subject here—cognizing (contemplating) and speaking (expounding). In opposition to the subject there is only a voiceless thing. Any object of knowledge (including man) can be perceived and cognized as a thing. But a subject as such cannot be perceived and studied as a thing, for as a subject it cannot, while remaining a subject, become voiceless, and consequently, a cognition of it can only be dialogic” (Bakhtin 1986:161).

⁶ Although I rely primarily on Bakhtin’s language for understanding utterances contextually, this basic insight has been emphasized in multiple traditions. For example, compare Gregory Bateson’s notion that human communication is first and foremost about social relationships (1972), Charles Morris’ emphasis on the pragmatic aspects of speech (1938), and Deirdre McCloskey’s research on the rhetoric of economics (1983).

⁷ This tendency in the history of the social sciences has been aided by the convention of many social scientists themselves to present their ideas monologically.

What do a social anthropologist with field experience in Indonesia and Morocco (Clifford Geertz), a medieval European historian (Sylvia Thrupp), a sociologist who studied the American military (Morris Janowitz), a multidisciplinary social scientist who studied the elite class of Iran (Marvin Zonis), and an economist who studied international trade (H. G. Johnson) have in common? All participated, in varying degrees and at different times, in the CCSNN. Although it is possible within each individual's work to identify the influences of some of the other members, it is not possible to classify this group into a single paradigm or intellectual movement. *The unity of the CCSNN was not that of a paradigm, but rather the unity of a dialogue*: multiple voices interacted and responded to each other in an ongoing process in which the qualities of each constituent voice changed over time, and a final synthesis of ideas was never attained nor even possible. In order to identify and understand the dialogue that permeated the CCSNN, we require a dialogic form history that addresses the statements of the past within their context (Figure 2).⁸

For the historian of the social sciences, as well as practicing social scientists generally, the CCSNN is a notable case. Nominally, the CCSNN was intended to study the “new nations” that emerged from the rapid decolonization, particularly in Africa and Asia, after WWII. Although it counted many scholars associated with the modernization paradigm⁹ among its members (David Apter, Leonard Binder, Edward Shils) and visitors (Robert Bellah, S. N. Eisenstadt, Marion Levy Jr., et al.), the CCSNN itself was not a unitary research center integrated by a single paradigm: many of its scholars self-identified more as critics than proponents of modernization theory. The CCSNN was a “Committee,” an organizational unit unique to the University of Chicago, and had less structure and responsibilities than either traditional academic disciplines or a research center with a specified mandate. Because of these qualities, the CCSNN is a valuable model for how to promote interaction across disciplines, theories, and

⁸ I use the term *dialogic history* to differentiate this form from the two aforementioned sociological approaches. However, this is not a new form of history, but rather what many historians have been doing all along when they report statements of the past as responses to particular circumstances.

⁹ See Gilman (2003) and Latham (2000) for histories of the modernization paradigm.

empirical areas in the social sciences. It was a place in which ideas and theories interacted in the absence of the disciplinary antagonism that leads to conflicts about the jurisdiction over intellectual problems (cf. Abbott 1988 on professions generally). Dialogue at the CCSNN was thus not only something to be valued in its own right (Levine, 1995), but also a source of intellectual excitement and creativity.

This paper is organized to address three questions in turn: First, why has the CCSNN been largely erased from disciplinary histories? Second, how did the CCSNN come into being? Finally, what about it made it so influential in its members intellectual lives? In answering these questions, I will alternately emphasize the whig, sociological reductionist, and dialogical forms of history, respectively. My stress on the advantages of dialogical history requires a particular form of presentation in this essay that is neither narrative history, nor the “hypothesis and evidence” format of modern empirical social science. Rather, a description of what the CCSNN was will gradually emerge as I answer the above questions and elaborate these distinct ways of telling its history, and each section will build off of the insights of the prior sections. Understanding what made the CCSNN an engaging place for its members not only improves our knowledge of the history of the social sciences, but also provides a model for how to engage in social science inquiry.

WHIG HISTORY AND THE FORGETTING OF THE CCSNN

In this section I will address the question of why the CCSNN has been largely forgotten. There are many reasons that the CCSNN does not play a large role in disciplinary self-histories. Most obviously, its members rarely cite the Committee itself, or even other members’ works in their own writings; as I will demonstrate in later sections, the influence the CCSNN had in shaping its members’ ideas was of a deeper sort than what a casual citation tends to reveal. Another reason for the vanishing of the CCSNN has to do with particular moments and trends in academic thought: most notably, the discipline of Anthropology experienced a strong break in the late 1960s as a new generation of anthropologists

critiqued their predecessors for supposedly producing knowledge in the service of colonial interests, a critique that has often been misguided (compare Lewis, 2005). While these and other factors are partially responsible for the absence of the CCSNN in disciplinary histories, a more fundamental factor virtually guaranteed the rapid forgetting of the CCSNN: the convention in social science publishing to represent past ideas according to their ability to frame present research. The CCSNN lacks visibility among subsequent social science research precisely because it is incompatible with the monologic representation of texts that is conventional in such publications. In this section I will identify why the CCSNN has been forgotten by examining how later social scientists have told the history of the CCSNN and for what purposes.

Two things become apparent from a sampling of how the CCSNN has been represented by other social scientists: First, the CCSNN as a group has been mostly forgotten by subsequent researchers, and second, to the extent that it has been remembered, it has been lumped together with “modernization theory,” a recognizable paradigm and useful straw man for subsequent theories (compare Abbott 2001:133). Sociologists have argued that prominence in intellectual fields requires the neat packaging of complex ideas into a formula that can be cited by others (Latour 1987; compare Lamont, 1987). However, the CCSNN was not a school of thought or identifiable paradigm which could be reduced to a formula. Its individual members were highly prolific in their respective fields, but their individually authored works were not seen as connected with the CCSNN itself. Thus, despite its centrality to the intellectual lives of its members, the CCSNN nearly vanishes from view if we examine the texts of its members in separation from the intellectual discussions they engaged in. However, the CCSNN does have limited visibility in the historical record through the two edited volumes it directly commissioned (Geertz 1963; Johnson 1967). I will first examine the process through which dialogue at the CCSNN was represented within these volumes before discussing how the volumes have been represented in subsequent research.

While dialogue can be reproduced and created in the genre of the novel (Bakhtin 1981), the practices of social science publishing—in which clear, unambiguous, and final statements are sought—generally forbid this. The resulting problem of how to recreate the exciting dialogue of the CCSNN within a publication was perceived by its members. During its first year of operation, the CCSNN hosted several seminar papers, and the members of the CCSNN wanted to expose these papers to a wider audience, as well as increase the Committee’s visibility. The CCSNN began discussing venues for publishing its weekly seminars paper as early as November of 1960 (Rheinsteins Papers, 69.7, minutes 11/4/1960). That December, members discussed two possible publication venues: Geertz, who had a contact at the Free Press stated that they agreed to publish the volume “sight unseen,” and Sylvia Thrupp said that she would discuss options with her contact at Mouton (Rheinsteins, 69.7, minutes 12/15/1960). Eventually the decision was made to move forward with the Free Press, with the title of *Old Societies in New States (OSNS)* and Geertz as editor.

Judging from the eventual form and contents of *OSNS*, Geertz took a fairly administrative, as opposed to theoretical, stance in his role as editor: he contributed a chapter but refrained from providing a theoretical manifesto to introduce the book. In fact, in the final stage of editing the volume, Geertz had second thoughts about the whole project:

Mr. Geertz reported that having received all but two of the papers he felt somewhat uneasy about publishing them as a hard-bound book with the Free Press since they do not seem to have any underlying unity and are of different lengths, etc. (Rheinsteins Papers 69.7, Executive Committee Minutes of 10/31/1961).

Ultimately, concerns over having the collection published in a format that could be reviewed in major journals and given a wide circulation, thus boosting the CCSNN’s visibility, trumped Geertz’ objections, and the CCSNN decided to go through with its plans with the Free Press. It was also suggested in this meeting that an effort be made to establish a book series in order to advertise the CCSNN’s achievements, as well as address Geertz’ concerns over the lack of theoretical coherence:

It is suggested that the title [of *OSNS*] convey the impression that the volume is part of a series so that we may later publish a volume of other collections of seminar papers as part of the series. This would also draw attention to the fact that the volume represents our deliberations and is not intended to be a major theoretical work. (Rheinstein Papers, 69.7, Minutes of 10/31/1961)

Although the CCSNN would publish one more such edited volume (Johnson, 1967) and its members would contribute to and edit other volumes, no such book series was ever established.

Turning from the story of its creation to its contents, *OSNS* consisted of a diverse set of statements in different topical areas. While Geertz played the role of the unobtrusive editor, the task of framing the book as a whole was left to David Apter and Edward Shils. Apter begins his 4-page preface to the volume by posing “the problem of the new states,” (that is, how the countries that achieved independence after 1945 tried to establish authority amid rapid social change and across internal divisions) arguing for the necessity of a place like the CCSNN. Apter makes the case that: 1) the new nations are important to study in their own right, 2) economic development is deeply intertwined with political development and broader social change, 3) studying the new nations helps promote social theory, as they provide “grist for the social scientists’ mill”, 4) studying the new nations also helps avoid the parochialism of area studies, 5) the diverse interests of members are held together by a shared interest in promoting democracy, and 6) that the CCSNN attempts to retain the collegial atmosphere of the Center for Advanced Studies in the Behavioral Sciences (CASBS), particularly “its loose structure, its spontaneity, and its creativity” (viii). While not a theoretical manifesto, this preface presents a mission statement and justifies the existence of the CCSNN to outsiders. Shils’ contribution to the volume, “On the comparative study of the new states,” is part mission statement and part theoretical elaboration on the concepts of comparison, the new states, and macrosociology. Shils does not develop a full theory, but like Apter, he does argue that the new states should be studied in a particular way.

The remaining contributions are chapters by Marriott, Apter, Geertz, Fallers, Rheinstein, Bowman and Anderson, and Robert LeVine, and each is an exploration of a topic of interest to the

author rather than a fleshing-out of Apter's and Shils' initial statements. Each chapter stands alone, with few citations to the other authors. So although its contributors *felt* that the CCSNN was a place for exciting dialogue, this dialogue was lost in the transformation of a year's worth of seminar meetings into a standard social science publication.

The publication of *OSNS* in 1963 was in effect the crowning achievement of the work done between 1960 and 1961, but not all contemporary reviewers were infected by the sense of excitement that the Committee attempted to communicate. Wendell Bell, who reviewed the volume for *The American Journal of Sociology* (1964) wrote favorably of the individual chapters, but criticized the volume as being "another non-book," that is, an edited volume that lacked a unifying theme or synthesis. Karl Von Vorys, who reviewed the book for *The Journal of Asian Studies* criticized it for having insufficient empirical work, noting that only Robert Levine's chapter relied substantially on empirical data. However, James Smoot Coleman's review in *The American Sociological Review* (1965) was largely positive, and he seemed unbothered by the lack of coherence in the volume which Bell critiqued, stating that: "...none of the authors pretend to speak with finality or precision; indeed, each seeks only to raise some relevant questions, to expose the limits of our present knowledge-which are very narrow indeed; and to suggest some exploratory hypotheses. What they have created is a most comprehensive and provocative agenda for future research" (454). While a positive review, Coleman's conclusion that *OSNS* was "provocative" underscores that it was not yet a coherent statement that could be either refuted or bolstered by subsequent researchers.

A citation analysis of references to *OSNS* reveals that it received modest and steady attention from subsequent researchers (see Figure 3). The edited volume *Communications and Political Development* (Pye, 1963), is a good comparison text: published by a group that was already well established (the Committee on Comparative Politics of the SSRC), Pye's volume received much more initial attention which declined gradually over time. Many of the more recent citations to *OSNS* refer

particularly to Geertz' own contribution to the chapter (and not the edited volume as a whole), although there has been a resurgence of interest in the CCSNN itself: Paley (2002) cites Apter's introduction to *OSNS* and the work of the CCSNN in general as an "historical antecedent" to contemporary anthropological research of democracy, and Berger (2003) describes the CCSNN as a locus of modernization research, citing Geertz' contribution to *OSNS*.

The second, and final, edited volume published officially under the auspices of the CCSNN was *Economic Nationalism in Old and New States* (Johnson, 1967). Harry Johnson was Executive Secretary of the CCSNN for the 1964-65 year, a position that entailed organizing meetings and inviting presentations. The volume that he edited from the papers presented in that year had a slightly more thematic approach—tending to examine economic questions in particular—but it too lacked a coherent frame. As a citation analysis shows (Figure 3), it had an even more diminished legacy than *OSNS*.

In concluding this first vision of the history of the CCSNN, it is not surprising that the CCSNN mostly vanished from view from subsequent research. The most valuable quality of the CCSNN—its capacity to stimulate dialogue—is something that is not easily communicated and sustained via common social science publishing practices. Precisely because the CCSNN lacked a clear and coherent paradigm, few later scholars found it a useful voice to respond to. However, this tendency is more a repudiation of the implicit self-history of normal social science inquiry than it is a mark against the CCSNN: the fact remains that many influential social scientists have passed through and been influenced by the CCSNN, and we have yet to identify what made the CCSNN an exceptional place. In the following section, I will conduct an institutional history of the CCSNN to bring us closer to an answer.

AN INSTITUTIONAL HISTORY OF THE CCSNN: CREATING A CONTEXT FOR DIALOGUE

That the CCSNN quickly faded from disciplinary histories is all the more notable given the exceptional attention, status, and support it was given by other scholars and funding agencies. As with a sociological reductionist history, my emphasis in this section will be primarily on contextual factors such

as financial and institutional support (Convert and Heilbron, 2007), the status and cultural capital of intellectuals (Collins 1998), and the distribution of power in intellectual fields (Bourdieu 1988).

One advantage of a sociological reductionist history of the social sciences is that it serves as an antidote for the naïve realism that many social scientists tend to have about their own work: the success of an idea is explained, not because it is presumed to mirror reality, but because of multiple structural factors. Yet such sociological reductionist approaches are necessarily inadequate when the object of analysis is an ongoing dialogue, as opposed to a reified idea, person, or movement. In particular, they are inadequate to apply to the history of the CCSNN because, in such a framework, *there is no explanandum*: these approaches are generally designed to explain success in intellectual fields (Frickel and Gross 2005), but as the whig history presented above reveals, the CCSNN had no successful paradigm. My goal in this section is to develop a narrative history to understand how the CCSNN was created, how it survived over several years, and how it eventually dissolved, but unlike a sociological reductionist history, I will stop short of causally explaining the successes and failures of the CCSNN.

The Prehistory of the CCSNN and The Postwar Moment in Social Science

The decades immediately following WWII were a unique moment of growth and change in the American social sciences (Abbott and Sparrow, 2007; Turner and Turner, 1990). Four developments of the postwar period in particular—the expansion of the university system, the rise of area studies, the adoption of both scientific methodology and grand theory in the social sciences, and the explosive growth of the modernization paradigm as a transdisciplinary research program—helped set the stage for the CCSNN.

The American university system grew rapidly in the decades following WWII. New colleges and universities were founded and expanded as more Americans were attending college, including a wave of veterans funded by the GI Bill (Abbott and Sparrow, 2007), among which were two veterans who founded the CCSNN: Geertz and Apter. The growth of the university system through the 1950's also

meant that academic careers would be readily available for the first few cohorts after the war. The supply of academic positions was so high that, with the right qualifications and recommendations, academic appointments were easily obtained—David Apter reports never having applied for a job in his career, moving from Northwestern, to the University of Chicago, and eventually Berkeley, within the span of a decade (personal communication). At the same time, federal funding for universities also increased as the government forged new partnerships with universities for research (Steinmetz, 2007). This was a fertile field for new academic undertakings.

One locus of expansion was in the field of area studies, the set of interdisciplinary research fields defined by world geographical, cultural, or linguistic boundaries. At the end of the war, federal and private foundation resources were increasingly directed toward area studies in the social sciences and humanities (Hall, 1947; Szanton, 2004:4; Ross, 2003:230). While there have been several debates over the aims and effects of area studies, one effect of the rise of areas studies was that the study of the non-West became a legitimate and well-supported academic task. Additionally, the rise in funding for the social sciences was aided by the broad sentiment that the social sciences had finally “arrived” as positive sciences (Ross, 2003). This sense of the social sciences as maturing also supported the notion that, like the natural sciences, they could be funded by the government and foundations in pursuit of practical results.

Each of these three broad developments were influential to the fourth general trend in the postwar social sciences: the establishment of the modernization paradigm as a set of ideas and research programs that were met with enthusiasm by scholars, educators, policy-makers, and government officials. As Michael Latham notes: “Invoked across disciplines, modernization seemed to promise a kind of ‘unified field theory’ for social science” (2003:727). Modernization theory was not only a successful paradigm, but it was a paradigm that attracted a large quantity of funding and support.

While there were multiple research centers that combined Parsonian insights, modernization theories, and attention to specific areas, the Committee on Comparative Politics (CCP) of the Social Science Research Center (SSRC) demands specific attention because of its relation to the CCSNN. Founded in 1954 with a grant from the Carnegie Corporation, the CCP helped spread a behaviorist approach to political science and political sociology (Gilman, 2003:126). The dominant theories in use at the CCP were heavily influenced by Talcott Parsons, particularly through the impact of Marion Levy, Jr., a student of Parsons. The main activities of the CCP were to hold regular conferences that attracted scholars from across the country, as well as to edit and publish a book series ("Studies in Political Development" of the Princeton University Press). There were several ties between the CCP and the CCSNN, as members of the CCSNN (including Apter, Fallers, and Shils) had attended CCP conferences, and other members would eventually publish in the CCP book series, including one volume in the series that was edited by CCSNN member Leonard Binder (1971).

Founding the CCSNN: 1958-1960

While these factors made the creation of the CCSNN possible, it was through the efforts of four scholars that the CCSNN materialized. David Apter initially had an idea to create a Committee at the University of Chicago that was related to his research in Africa in the late 1950's. During the academic year of 1958-59 this idea took shape in discussions held between Apter, Shils, Fallers and Geertz, while the four were fellows at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences (CASBS). Before discussing the CCSNN further, it is necessary to take a closer look at this group whose personalities and interests shaped the initial design of the CCSNN.

David Apter (1924-2010; PhD Princeton, Political Science, 1954). After serving as an Army medic in WWII, Apter (who had dropped out from high school) attended Antioch College with the aid of the GI Bill. He studied political science and sociology at Princeton, under Marion Levy Jr. For his dissertation work, Apter studied the developing political institutions of the Gold Coast during the process of

decolonization, against the will of his advisors who had instead recommended a study of socialism in Norway. After graduating from Princeton, Apter taught for a year at Northwestern University, and then spent a year in Uganda at the East African Institute of Social Research (where Fallers was at the time). Apter then accepted an appointment in Political Science department at the University of Chicago, and spent the 1958-59 academic year as an invited fellow at the CASBS. While at the CASBS, Apter began discussing his idea for a new Committee at Chicago with Shils, and eventually invited Fallers and Geertz to help in planning (personal communication).

Lloyd "Tom" Fallers, Jr. (1925-1974, PhD University of Chicago, Anthropology, 1953). Educated primarily at the University of Chicago, Fallers briefly attended the London School of Economics under a Fulbright Scholarship, where he studied with Audrey Richards, Raymond Firth, Daryll Forde, and Edmund Leach. Fallers' dissertation research was conducted in the British Protectorate of Uganda between 1950 and 1952. In 1953, Fallers held a one-year lectureship at Princeton, where he worked with Marion Levy Jr. and an interdisciplinary team of scholars interested in modernization research. Fallers returned to Uganda from 1954 to 1957, conducting research and acting as Richards' successor as Director of the East African Institute for Social Research, a position he was appointed when he was 29 years old. Fallers then returned to the United States and was appointed as assistant professor of anthropology at the University of California, Berkeley. Fallers spent the 1958-59 academic year at CASBS, before returning to Berkeley, and was then hired by the Anthropology Department of the University of Chicago in 1960 (Janowitz Papers, 178.2, Fred Eggan's eulogy; Redfield Papers 9.14).

Clifford Geertz (1926-2006, PhD Harvard University, Anthropology, 1956). After serving in the U.S. Navy in WWII from 1943-45, Geertz attended Antioch College on the GI Bill (Handler, 1991), where he studied under the philosopher George Geiger (Geertz, 2001). Following Geiger's advice, Geertz attended Harvard's Department of Social Relations to study anthropology. He conducted fieldwork in Indonesia with an interdisciplinary team of scholars and graduate students from Harvard and the Center

for International Studies at MIT, for a project funded by the Ford Foundation (Handler, 1991). Geertz taught at Harvard for a year before returning to Indonesia. He was then hired as an Assistant Professor at Berkeley, but spent the 1958-59 year at CASBS. Geertz taught at Berkeley for the 1959-1960 academic year before moving to the University of Chicago.

Edward Shils (1910-1995, BA University of Pennsylvania, 1931). While older than the other three by only one academic generation (Shils was 14 years older than Apter), a wide gulf separated Shils' experience from the younger three. Shils moved to Chicago in 1932, initially working as a social worker while attending classes at the University of Chicago (Shils, 2006:39-40). Shils introduced himself to Chicago sociologist Louis Wirth (with whom a young Shils would translate Karl Mannheim's *Ideology and Utopia*) who helped Shils to enter the academic world first as a research assistant, and then as instructor and professor, even though Shils lacked the customary PhD for such positions (46-7).¹⁰ During WWII, Shils joined the war effort, analyzing German media in the Psychological Warfare Division in Europe—his well-known article with Morris Janowitz (who would also become a CCSNN member) on social cohesion in the Wehrmacht (Shils and Janowitz, 1948) would emerge from this experience. After the war Shils returned to the University of Chicago, teaching both in the Department of Sociology and in the Committee on Social Thought, and states that he was recruited by Chancellor Robert Hutchins to develop the undergraduate curriculum, particularly the “Social Science II” course (46). Thus, by the time of Shils' year at the CASBS, he was a well-known senior scholar, with strong ties in intellectual circles and at the University of Chicago.

In the academic year of 1958-59, Apter, Fallers, Geertz, and Shils converged as invited fellows to CASBS.¹¹ Apter undertook much of the preliminary organizational work to found the CCSNN—recruiting

¹⁰ See Pooley (2007) on Shils' changing attitude toward Mannheim's work.

¹¹ The 1958-9 cohort at CASBS contained many enormously influential scholars. To name just a handful: Thomas Kuhn (then working on his *Structures of Scientific Revolutions*), W.V.O Quine (developing the ideas he would publish in *Word and Object*), Ronald Coase, Raymond Firth, Cora DuBois, Daniel Bell, Fred Eggan, George Homans,

scholars, shoring up support from the University administration, and attracting funding. As early as December of 1958, Apter was in correspondence with Chauncy Harris (Dean of Social Sciences at Chicago), discussing the relative merits of different kinds of interdisciplinary programs and his perceptions of what the Ford Foundation was interested in funding (CCSNN, 1.1).

Although the decision to create an interdisciplinary Committee to research newly independent states was settled on in 1958, more organizational work was needed before a large scale grant proposal could be sent to funding agencies for consideration. In the process, the focus of the Committee shifted to deemphasize the disciplinary influence of political science, while retaining a focus on political development: this can be seen in the change in the official name from a “program of studies in the comparative politics of new nations,” to the “Committee for the Comparative Study of New Nations”—a title that was suggested by Max Rheinstein, who wanted to make sure that there was room for legal studies (CCSNN 21.8. Rheinstein to Apter, 5/19/1959). Although political science had a strong influence on the CCSNN, there were actually more anthropologists in attendance over time (Figure 4).

In June of 1959, the CCSNN was awarded support from the Carnegie Corporation, in the form of a “planning grant” of \$8,600—roughly \$63,000 in 2009 inflation-adjusted dollars. This allowed Apter to spend the 1959-1960 academic year doing the necessary footwork to found the Committee (CCSNN, 1.1). Just after Apter was notified of the approval of a grant to found the CCSNN, William Marvel (Executive Associate at Carnegie) wrote to him: “Incidentally, I thought the Dobbs Ferry Conference [a conference on political development held by the CCP] was one of the very best of its kind that I have ever been to. The reason was simply that there was such a high proportion of really first-class people, in which company you must feel very much at home” (WWM to DEA, 7/1/1959, CCSNN 1.1). Marvel’s flattery of Apter and his peers demonstrates how the prior work of modernization scholars at the CCP helped pave the road for Apter to create the CCSNN.

and Roman Jakobson (Eggan Papers, 2.8). Additionally, Morris Janowitz and Melford Spiro, who would be later associated with the CCSNN, were also at CASBS that year.

With the support of the planning grant, and from administrators at the University of Chicago, the CCSNN submitted a proposal for five years of funding to the Carnegie Corporation. The proposed budget reveals high ambitions for the Committee: the Committee was envisioned to be a center for gathering data (with \$50,000 allotted to this function), supporting student research fellows (\$80,000) and three research assistants (\$45,000), supporting faculty research (\$127,000) and visiting researchers (\$50,000), hosting a conference on African development (\$47,500), with the remaining funds to be spent on secretarial support, overhead, and miscellaneous expenses (\$48,000), for a total of \$447,000. In January 1960, the Carnegie Corporation approved a five-year grant totaling \$350,000, or roughly \$2.5 million in 2009 adjusted dollars (CCSNN 1.1, Florence Anderson of Carnegie to Lawrence Kimpton, Chancellor of Chicago). William Marvel (of Carnegie) wrote to Apter on January 18th and stated that the initial sum requested was too much, but that the Committee would be allowed flexibility in how to spend the funds (CCSNN 1.1).

The CCSNN made use of this flexibility, as seen in how actual expenditures differed from the proposal. The primary expenditure was for faculty “secondment” (the practice of paying partial salaries, thus “buying” time from departmental and teaching duties), which accounted for roughly half of all expenditures. The plan to gather data was never implemented, and neither was a formal program to train lawyers and educators. The conference however did take place, although it was located in Ibadan, Nigeria and not in Chicago. One of the most important activities in the first two years was the weekly seminar, which was also the activity with the least direct expense. Each year, the CCSNN was required to send a progress report to the Carnegie Corporation—typically a 20 page document, with an executive summary and a list of activities and publications of members. Beyond this, oversight by the Carnegie Corporation was minimal, which allowed the activities of the CCSNN to settle toward those its members were most interested in doing. This also underscores that any economic determinist theory of the CCSNN—particularly one that would see the CCSNN as an expression of the interests of its funders—is

inadequate: the Carnegie Corporation had minimal control over how money was spent, and virtually no control over the content of discussions at the CCSNN.¹²

Establishing and Renewing the CCSNN: 1960-1965

From the initial group of four (Apter, Fallers, Geertz, and Shils), others were recruited to join the Committee. At the moment of its official birth, this consisted of: Max Rheinstein, professor of comparative law at the University of Chicago; C. Arnold Anderson, sociologist and professor of comparative education (and spouse of Mary Jean Bowman, an economist peripherally involved with the Committee); Peter Rossi, sociologist and director of the National Opinion Research Center (NORC); Norton Ginsburg, urban and political geographer; Robert LeVine, anthropologist and professor of human development; Manning Nash, anthropologist and editor of the journal *Economic Development and Cultural Change*; and Sylvia Thrupp, medieval historian and founder/editor of the journal *Comparative Studies in Society and History* (CCSNN 4.2). With the exception of Rheinstein (b. 1899), Shils (b. 1910), and Thrupp (b. 1903) this was a relatively young group of scholars who came of intellectual age after WWII and were now entering a highly productive stage of their careers.

The first official meeting of the CCSNN was an exciting moment, as is visible in a letter from Apter to Fallers (then at Berkeley):

Last Thursday in Cobb 312 the Committee for the Comparative Study of New Nations actually got underway. Shils had arrived from London the day before, as he has promised. Sylvia Thrupp gave her paper on traditionalism and innovation, and there was a first rate group present [...] It was somehow rather thrilling after all the months of thinking about it and planning. We exist. We even have a kind of "personality". It is widely regarded as a pretty high powered affair. Actually, looking around the group that attended, a pretty high proportion are "Center graduates" and the atmosphere is not unlike that of the Center [for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences]. (Fallers Papers, 2.7. Letter Apter to Fallers, 2/6/1960)

For the remainder of the 1959-1960 academic year the Committee met weekly as members presented their current work. A selection of these papers would be published in *OSNS*, as discussed above.

¹² Compare Lewis' (2005) criticism of the idea that Cold War-era anthropologists' work can be explained as resulting from the intentions of the Ford and Rockefeller foundations.

The first full year of operation had barely begun when the CCSNN faced its first major challenge. In the fall of 1960, Geertz, Fallers, and LeVine arrived, as had been planned. However, within months of their arrival, Apter announced he would leave Chicago for Berkeley the following year, citing health concerns (CCSNN 21.22, Minutes 10/6/1960). With the impending departure of Apter—who was the primary contact with Carnegie and had played the central administrative role—it was unclear how the Committee would operate, especially given its vague mandate. Furthermore, although Shils could exercise authority as Chairman, he did not devote much time to daily administrative work, and thus the CCSNN lacked clear leadership.

Upon Apter's departure in 1961 Fallers and Geertz became the de facto co-chairs, although Shils remained the nominal Chairman and Apter retained the title of Executive Secretary, exercised from Berkeley. Both Fallers and Geertz had entered a highly productive period in their careers, and they displayed less interest in doing the necessary institution-building to make the CCSNN look like a normal academic unit with clearly defined administrative roles and relations with the other academic units. Instead, they focused on keeping the weekly seminars interesting. In an update to Shils (then in Cambridge), Geertz reports that "the Committee seminar is going very well indeed, the group in general being a much more contentious lot than last year; and the reading-seminar room is working out as we hope it would, as a sort of—literally—underground salon des notables" (CCSNN 22.4. Geertz to Shils, November 14, 1961).

Apter, observing from Berkeley, began to fear that under the leadership of Fallers and Geertz, the CCSNN was not being administered according to the dictates of the proposal sent to Carnegie. In November of 1961, Apter wrote to Janowitz that he felt that the CCSNN was not adequately following through with its intended training program, even requesting that Janowitz and Binder put some pressure on Fallers and Geertz on this point (Janowitz Papers, 5.14; 11/17/1961). It is not clear to what

extent Janowitz followed through with Apter's suggestion, but ultimately CCSNN activities continued to drift further from what was proposed to Carnegie.

Recognizing that control of the CCSNN was exercised by a small group (primarily Fallers, Geertz, Binder and Janowitz), Shils wrote to this group in April of 1962 to suggest that they institutionalize the group as an "Executive Committee" (CCSNN 25.13). Shils remained Chairman, and Geertz took the title of Executive Secretary, but most decision making had been delegated to the new Executive Committee, which held meetings separate from the weekly seminar to plan future activities, decide on speakers to invite and graduate fellows to accept. Yet even with the assistance of the Executive Committee and Shirley Clarkson (Administrative Assistant), the role of Chairman entailed a modest amount of administrative work. During Shils' absence from Chicago during 1962 and 1963, Fallers took over as acting Chairman, although somewhat reluctantly: at the time he was also chairman of the Near East and Africa Committee, and felt he was unable to focus on his own research (CCSNN 21.6. Fallers to Shils, July 17, 1962).

Although its members remained invested in the CCSNN, with the absence of Apter the Committee's relationship with Carnegie became strained. Without regular communication with Carnegie, the CCSNN had no way to gauge Carnegie's continued interest or satisfaction with its activities. Two events made clear to CCSNN members that they needed to keep a closer watch on their relationship with Carnegie. The first occurred when a subgroup of the CCSNN (Binder, Fallers, Geertz, and Yalman) applied to Carnegie for a separate grant to fund a joint study of fieldwork in their separate sites (CCSNN 1.11). This group was surprised when they received a rejection from Carnegie, and were not sure how to interpret what this might mean for the CCSNN itself. This can be seen in a report from Shirley Clarkson to Shils (who was not in Chicago at the time):

It seems possible that there is some estrangement in our relationship with Carnegie. In fact, I don't believe we've had any direct contact with anyone in New York since the Ibadan Conference while before that David [Apter] had quite frequent contact. Tom [Fallers] and Len [Binder] don't think that the rejection of their proposal necessarily reflects the attitude of

Carnegie towards the Committee but the extreme evasiveness and great delay are puzzling. (CCSNN 22.4. Clarkson to Shils, 11/28/1962).

A second cause for concern occurred when Binder wrote to Carnegie to request permission to apply the unspent funds from the Ibadan conference (approximately \$7,000) to a conference on Lebanese Democracy he was planning for the spring of 1963. This too was rejected, and Binder was notified that CCSNN funds had to be spent according to the initial proposal or returned to Carnegie: any repurposing of funds was to be considered as a new proposal (CCSNN 7.12).

Binder's conference on Lebanese Democracy went forward without CCSNN funding, although CCSNN members were active as presenters and discussants. A selection of papers from this conference were published in a volume edited by Binder (1966). During the week of the Conference, the Executive Committee met with Frederick Mosher, who was Marvel's successor at the Carnegie Corporation (CCSNN 3.4). It is not clear what happened in this meeting, but ultimately the relationship with Carnegie remained strong enough for Carnegie to fund the CCSNN's second five year budget in 1965.

In late 1963, the Executive Committee met to discuss the future of the CCSNN. At that point, members were dissatisfied with its organization, feeling that the group was "running out of topics and steam," that members were not devoting significant time to it, and that the effort to train student fellows had "not been altogether satisfactory" (CCSNN 25.13, Executive Committee Meeting Minutes, 11/11/1963). In this meeting, Geertz raised the question of dissolving the group, but all members present agreed they wanted to keep it running. Furthermore, it was agreed that the group should seek sufficient funding so that each quarter, two members could devote full time to research. Reflecting on what they found useful in the CCSNN, they decided to reframe the weekly seminar so that it would address the new topics its members were interested in. They agreed that it would not necessarily meet every quarter, and it would: "be considered a place to present new work for consideration and criticism by colleagues and not as a collective effort to exhaustively explore a single question." This was because they felt that "The Seminar's most useful function is as a place to explore new ideas and it should meet

when there are enough people with new work to present.” This required loosening the definition of what the CCSNN was studying, and so it was decided that meetings need not focus on the “present narrowly defined interests of the Committee.” Furthermore, it was encouraged to invite new members and take up new research subjects, “so long as they fall within the general framework of comparative analysis of political, sociological and economic developments”(ibid). In sum, the capacity of the CCSNN to stimulate dialogue among its members was flagging, and the group reacted by suggesting remedies. It was also at this meeting that Geertz announced he would step down from the position of Executive Secretary during the 1964-65 year while he was in Morocco, and that the economist Harry Johnson would take his place (ibid).

In October of 1964, Johnson (then Executive Secretary) and Shils (Chairman) sent out a proposal to Carnegie for five more years of funding, requesting \$60,000 a year for 5 years (\$300,000). The budget was much simpler than the 1960 proposal, with only four line-items: 50% devoted to faculty secondment, 25% to student fellows, 20% to secretarial support, and 5% to documents and supplies. Carnegie responded by approving a smaller grant of \$200,000 (roughly \$1.4 M in 2009 dollars). Although less than what was requested, this proved to be a more than sufficient sum: by the mid-1960's, the Committee retained a large positive balance each year (close to \$100,000), although spending at this point was approximately equal to what they were allotted each year (\$40,000). To resolve this, Carnegie delayed one payment for a year, with the effect of extending the payment period by one year (CCSNN 25.14. Stinespring to Exec. Committee, 1/16/1967).

In reviewing the first five years of activity at the CCSNN, the intensity of dialogue among its members fluctuated, but was sustained enough for its members to pursue and secure a second five-year grant. At first glance, the CCSNN followed a predictable pattern for doing social science research: an “exciting” new topic was supported by a large funding agency that had interest in it, the Committee brought together researchers to give planned talks on the topic which were received with fanfare, and

the results were concatenated and published in an edited volume as evidence of the group's success. However, the activities of the CCSNN were never fully institutionalized or even closely monitored by its funder. Following Apter's departure less effort was placed on teaching, training, and "data gathering," and instead activity centered on what these members found most interesting: holding weekly seminars and bringing in outside speakers. While the CCSNN was not institutionalized to look like an ordinary academic unit, its ability to arouse the interest of its members and motivate them in their work kept the CCSNN a vibrant place. Instead of faltering after its first year, the CCSNN adapted and remained a lively place for intellectual interaction for the remainder of the 1960's.

New Members, Ideas, and Challenges: 1965-1970

At the start of the second five-year grant from Carnegie, the CCSNN was re-energized by new members and new topics. The mid-1960s saw the arrival of Bernard Cohn (anthropology), Philip Foster (education), Arcadius Kahan (economics), and for a brief time, Melford Spiro (anthropology). In the remainder of the 1960's, new members included William Polk (history), Lloyd and Susanne Rudolph (both in political science), Marvin Zonis (political science), Marc Galanter (law), and Milton Singer (anthropology). While the CCSNN was an exciting place for the new members, some of the older members were drawn by other interests away from the CCSNN.

Each new member brought a new set of theoretical questions and experiences from their fieldwork and empirical research. Many of these new members were immediately struck by the excitement and liveliness of CCSNN meetings (Zonis, personal communication). Susanne Rudolph expresses her response upon joining the Committee:

We were very startled, because the Harvard style of argumentation was so much more genteel. The institutional style was remarkably different. And it was more emphatic in the Committee on New Nations because there were new ideas and everybody was excited about what they were doing. (Susanne Rudolph, personal communication)

Although drawn to the CCSNN meetings, the new scholars did not necessarily feel a need to constrain their own research to fit the mold of what CCSNN members had been doing up to then:

I wasn't influenced by any particular direction the Committee was taking. I didn't feel I wanted to do it the way Fallers did it or the way Geertz did it or the way Shils did it. But, what was created was an overall atmosphere in which these things mattered. There weren't particular cleavages in the Committee, which would have been both productive and maybe unproductive. People were doing their thing, and you listened to other people's thing and critiqued it. But [...] you didn't have factionalism in the Committee. (Susanne Rudolph, personal communication)

As I will discuss in the following section, this atmosphere helped sustain dialogue, as opposed to narrow debate, across disciplines and areas.

In what would have a major effect on the CCSNN as a whole, Geertz' research interests continued to shift away from solely focusing on macrosociological problems. In 1967, Geertz was approached with an offer to join the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton. His colleagues were anxious to retain Geertz at Chicago, in part because of the role he played in making the CCSNN an exciting place, writing to him: "We want and need an intensification of exchange and we believe that this can be achieved by your more active involvement" (CCSNN 2.1. Shils, Fallers, Janowitz, and Zolberg to Geertz, 11/27/1967).

Recognizing that the major attraction to the IAS was that Geertz would be freed from teaching and administrative responsibilities, the executive committee of the CCSNN approached Geertz with an offer to entice him to stay. Geertz was offered the position of Chairman of the CCSNN, and would be able to shape CCSNN activities according to his own interests. Writing a response from Morocco, Geertz stated that he intended to stay at Chicago and attached a draft proposal for the new organization of the CCSNN, entitled (with characteristic wit): "From New Nations to Old Obsessions: A Proposal for the General Betterment and Intellectual Improvement of the Committee for the Comparative Study of New Nations, Lately Fallen into a Certain Lassitude and Indirection" (Fallers Papers, 6.6). In this proposal, Geertz suggested that the CCSNN take a two-pronged approach: first, by renewing the initial focus on important macrosociological topics and comparisons, and second, by running a workshop on the subject of "culture." This latter function was in effect a concession to Geertz, providing him with an opportunity

to gather a group of scholars and students to think about the general concerns he was then interested in.

In 1970, Geertz was once again offered an appointment at IAS, where he would have no students or teaching duties and could focus on his research and writing.¹³ This time, Geertz accepted the offer and notified the CCSNN in March of 1970 that he would be taking the post beginning in the autumn. Fallers was nominated to take the position of Chairman, which he began shortly after Geertz' announcement.

A final important change during the late 1960's was in the availability of funding for social science research. During the initial years of the Committee, funding was easy to obtain for members—large sums were acquired by the Committee as a whole and by its individual members. By the late 1960's the University of Chicago was facing impending budget shortfalls (Boyer, 1999). While federal agencies and foundations provided substantial funding for social science research through the 1970's, Fallers, in his correspondence with Geertz, displayed a sense of hard times ahead:

[Joseph] Ben-David was reading me a sermon the other day about how American academia has misused its Seven Fat Years during the late 'fifties and early 'sixties, thereby bringing on the Seven Lean ones and no doubt he's right. (Fallers Papers 6.6, Fallers to Geertz, 9/1/1970)

Although members felt that research funding would be difficult to obtain, the CCSNN did secure one more multi-year grant in 1971, but of a smaller scale than previous grants.

Fallers thus assumed the chairmanship at a difficult moment. While personnel changes and the introduction of new ideas kept the CCSNN feeling fresh and exciting, the departure of Geertz meant the loss of a key member. Furthermore, the CCSNN was at the end of its second five-year funding period, and decisive action would be necessary to keep the CCSNN going.

Winding Down the CCSNN: 1970-1975

¹³ However, Geertz did have an unexpected administrative crisis resulting from his attempt to invite his colleague Robert Bellah to join the IAS in 1973. See Bortolini (2011) for a discussion of this event.

Fallers' first major action as chairman was to consider closing the CCSNN. In November of 1970, he sent out a letter to each member of the Executive Committee (then consisting of Binder, Cohn, Janowitz, Zolberg, and Shils), requesting help "in winding up [sic] the affairs of the Committee in a fitting manner—providing, of course, that you agree with me that they ought now to be wound up." While he requested the opinions of the other members, he made his opinion clear: "I have concluded, however, that an attempt to raise new funds would be a mistake. There is no longer enough fire in the ashes to make it worth rekindling. The Committee has existed for ten years—a reasonable life-span for an enterprise of this sort" (CCSNN 26.1. Fallers to Janowitz, 11/2/1970). However, the other members of the Executive Committee were not convinced that the CCSNN should be disbanded, as seen in Zolberg's response:

I am not at all persuaded that there is no way for the Committee to be a vital center in our lives. Several of us share a commitment to comparative societal analysis, an intellectual discipline which is being squeezed out of contemporary social sciences. Some of us, and perhaps only us, have the intellectual resources to preserve and develop that discipline. We could do so, using the Committee's resources, by reorganizing ourselves and being as ruthless in our recruitment as you and other founders were ten years ago. I don't think we would be self-serving in doing so; rather, we would be carrying on a trust. (CCSNN Papers. Zolberg to Fallers 11/9/1970)

Ultimately, the executive committee decided to keep the group running, although the time for acquiring funding to keep the group running was expiring. Within a month, Fallers sent letters to the Carnegie Corporation, the Ford Foundation, and the Rockefeller Foundation to gauge their interest in funding the CCSNN. Francis Sutton, who had worked with Fallers at Princeton in the 1950's, was at Ford at the time and expressed interest in taking over the responsibility of funding the CCSNN from Carnegie:

I have in fact read your letter about the Committee for the Comparative Study of New Nations with much interest and sympathy and have discussed it with my colleagues. It is not easy to finance this sort of undertaking nowadays, but I think we ought to look seriously at an application. (CCSNN 4.10, Sutton to Fallers January 25, 1971)

Fallers responded in late February with a proposal for \$150,000, which would allow for continued operation over the next four years (CCSNN 4.10). This proposal was accepted, but for a reduced sum of \$100,000 (roughly \$530,000 in 2009 dollars).

In an effort to bring new life to the CCSNN, in December of 1971 a new group of scholars was invited by the Executive Committee to join, including a group of historians (see table 3). In inviting a new group of scholars, the Executive Committee hoped to revitalize the CCSNN as a place for intense intellectual discussions. While seminar meetings continued, the vitality appears to have been drained: of this new group, some only had occasional interaction with the CCSNN.

Fallers remained chairman in 1972 but, overwhelmed by developments in the Anthropology department, decided institution building was more important than his continued research. By the late 1960's, Fallers had become increasingly aware, and at times despairing of, the conflict between engaging in social science inquiry, teaching, and institution building, which he expressed in a letter to Geertz:

Over the longer term, I just don't know. It seems quite possible to me that within the next few years one is going to have to choose between continuing research interests and a really heavy commitment to teaching and institution-maintenance. There is real question in my mind as to whether social science as a form of inquiry can survive in universities. The sciences will survive, but I can quite see the subject-matter of social science being more or less completely reclaimed by ideology unless this tendency is opposed by creative and devoted teaching. Alternatively, social science may have to survive outside the universities. It has always been a fragile plant and in its brief period of prosperity has not always been served by its practitioners in a manner helpful to its survival in the present stresses. I don't, however, mean to orate about this subject but simply to say that I feel the need to think through as fundamentally as I can during the next year what to do with the rest of my life, given the present disarray; should I put my somewhat diminished energy into teaching or into pursuing the intellectual questions that bug me? Which do I have the ability to do? Etc. However, next year I'd like to participate fully in the Committee's work. (Fallers Papers 6.7. Fallers to Geertz 4/29/1969)

By 1973, Fallers was actively seeking a successor for the Chairmanship of the CCSNN, but felt obstacles in directing the CCSNN to continue its activities in a manner he saw fitting. In January of 1973, Fallers wrote to Janowitz, who as Chair of the Sociology department had experience in academic administration, for advice in handling the CCSNN—in the same letter, Fallers discussed his hopes for building “the mission of anthropology” at the University of Virginia (Fallers Papers 7.20). While Janowitz was not very active in CCSNN meetings by this time, he responded to Fallers with encouragement in keeping the Committee running. Yet an important change occurred in the justification of the CCSNN:

In re the New Nations group—I believe that it should continue, not because it will serve the focal point it did, but because it serves a device for introducing faculty members, including new ones to the Divisional life of the social science, and does the same for a select number of students. It is a form of the higher public relations and it is a device that that has [...] possibilities at some future date. (Fallers Papers, 7.20. Janowitz to Fallers, 1/23/1973)

Instead of praised as an end in itself, Janowitz argued that the CCSNN was important because of the broader functions it played in the University of Chicago's intellectual life; this is clearly a sign that the CCSNN's days were numbered.

In February of 1973, Fallers wrote another letter to Janowitz before undergoing hospitalization for a minor surgery, in which he stated that there was a chance that Geertz would be attracted back to the University of Chicago. Fallers felt that this might help revitalize the CCSNN. This speculation never panned out, and by October of 1973, Fallers stepped down from the Executive Committee of the CCSNN, leaving its administration to the Binder, Cohn, Foster, Nash, Zolberg, and Shils. Fallers became increasingly sick and died in July of 1974. Although the CCSNN still existed as an organizational entity after his passing, its vibrancy was lost and its final year ended with little excitement and no further funding was obtained. Operations ceased with the expenditure of the last of the Ford Foundation funds in 1975.

If we were to limit our understanding of the CCSNN to the above narrative of its institutional history, we would be unable to see its importance in the history of the social sciences: the CCSNN appears as merely a group of social scientists who received a large sum from two major foundations, but produced no successful movement or overarching paradigm. Yet many members of the CCSNN have stated that their experience with the CCSNN was an important stage in their intellectual development, and so it is necessary to look closer at the qualities of the CCSNN. In order to understand what the CCSNN was and why it had such an influence on its members, it is necessary to take a closer look at the ideas of its members in this context.

DIALOGICAL HISTORY: THE CCSNN AS A PLACE FOR OPEN-ENDED DIALOGUE

“To understand another person’s utterance means to orient oneself with respect to it, to find the proper place for it in the corresponding context. For each word of the utterance that we are in process of understanding, we, as it were, lay down a set of our own answering words...*Any true understanding is dialogic in nature*” (Volosinov, 1929:102. Emphasis in original.)

While the previous sections have revealed aspects of what the CCSNN was, in this section I will examine the feature of the CCSNN that made it influential in its members’ careers, namely, its capacity to foster interdisciplinary dialogue. Although my goal is to understand the qualities of dialogue at the CCSNN, most of the dialogue has been lost—few notes from actual meetings survive. Furthermore, a comprehensive understanding of dialogue within the CCSNN requires a thorough presentation of its members’ intellectual pasts, their disciplinary homes, and their intellectual life trajectories, which is a task that is far beyond the scope of this paper. My goal in this section will be much more limited: I merely intend to establish that the CCSNN was a context for dialogical communication and thought, and to point to characteristic moments of dialogue at the CCSNN to illustrate this claim.

A dialogical history recognizes the texts of past social science as social acts that occurred in particular contexts: social scientists do not merely repeat their observations of the social world when they publish and present their work, but they also respond to imagined criticism, honor their colleagues and mentors, and seek tenure and promotion, among many other social actions. These motives can be present in varying degree in all utterances, and they cannot be extracted out from the texts we analyze. Although the full context of a text is not reproducible,¹⁴ it is possible to identify the important contextual features that are relevant to our present inquiry. In this section, I will select a handful of such features of the intellectual and world context to which CCSNN members were responding. Additionally, I will identify how the structure of the CCSNN, as well as the dispositions of its members—specifically their

¹⁴ This is a problem of human thought generally; compare Mead (1932) and Collingwood (1946). The import of this is that we exercise power in how we frame and represent the past, and the ideal of neutrally reporting past events is unattainable.

attitudes toward academic disciplines—helped promote dialogue and facilitate innovations in the social sciences. I conclude with a brief discussion of dialogue in the life and thought of Clifford Geertz.

Decolonization and the Moment of the “New Nations”

The newly independent nations of Africa and Asia were framed at the CCSNN as posing important and vital problems. Specifically, there was the question of how the new nations would emerge from colonial rule and how they would handle the challenges of developing political institutions, promoting economic growth, and avoiding violent conflict. This “problem” of the new nations was immediate and focused enough to generate interest from a wide range of scholars, but not so precisely defined as to exclude social scientists who did research in other areas.

While the term “new nations” was used as a master concept to identify what CCSNN members were studying, in practice the CCSNN relied on a broad and un-theorized definition of the term. At times, the concepts of “new nations” and “new states” were often used interchangeably, precisely because the thing under analysis (e.g., the place and social groups inhabiting the territory commonly recognized as “Nigeria” in 1960) was in the process of formation, which included both the creation of authority structures (the “state”) and a sense of “people-ness” (the “nation”). Initially, the term “new” referred to those countries that became independent after 1945. While many Latin American states had been independent since the 19th century, and thus were hardly “new” in the way that Ghana and India were, they were often considered as part of the population of “new nations” because they allowed for useful comparison. Furthermore, following Seymour Martin Lipset’s (1963) monograph that analyzed the United States as the “First New Nation,”¹⁵ the members of the CCSNN were interested in explicit comparisons with the US, inviting more American historians to see if there were useful comparisons that could be brought out in juxtaposing the United States with other “new nations” (Neil Harris, interview). And finally, from the very beginning, the experience of Western Europe was explicitly brought into

¹⁵ Lipset may have found the inspiration for this title from his colleague, David Apter, who had recently joined Lipset at UC Berkeley (Apter, personal communication).

relation with the newly independent states of Africa and Asia: Thrupp was an historian of medieval Europe, but even more centrally, the canon of 19th century social thought (Marx, Durkheim, Weber, et al.) resulted from attempts to make sense of the experience of Western Europe.¹⁶ So while the “problem of new nations” emphasized the particular experiences of decolonization in Africa and Asia, members were open to any comparisons that would allow for insight into the experiences of the new nations.

Yet while initially useful in providing a focal point for discussion, the category of “new nations” was not stable, particularly as events within decolonizing countries unfolded. In 1966, there were several bloody conflicts in Africa and Asia, and this influenced CCSNN members’ attitudes. Writing from Morocco, Geertz reports to Fallers:

Well today is two days after the end of the Nkrumah era (at least temporarily), three after the Syrian coup, three after the demission of Nasution and the return of Yani [of Indonesia]—I told you: old Sukarnos not only never die, they don’t even fade away. (Though, God knows, tomorrow they may finally get him). Seven coups in four months in black Africa, including the frightful Nigerian one: when you go out of office around here you go out of office no joke. I think we should disband the New Nations Committee on the grounds that the objects of study are not playing the game by refusing to obey established sociological laws.” (Fallers Papers 6.6. Geertz to Lloyd and Margaret Fallers, 2/27/1966)

These events were a blow to the optimism of members in the possibilities for the new nations, as some of their fears regarding the potential for violence were confirmed. But it also demonstrates that the very concept that served as the nominal object of study at the CCSNN was inherently fluid and unstable.

Dialogic Critique: The Case of Talcott Parsons

¹⁶ It is worth quoting at length a document that makes the case for comparison at the CCSNN: “...rather than simply accepting the Western experience and the concepts which were developed as aids to understanding it as a kind of yardstick against which to measure the contemporary non-Western world, we have found it useful to look back on the Western experience directly, to ask how far this experience is really applicable and how far concepts derived from it require modification if they are to be useful in understanding the “third world” of today. This has proved a major stimulus to discussion of the methodology of comparative studies—one of the Committee’s major preoccupations.” (CCSNN 1.11, “Comparative Studies...” circa 1964-65)

As I have argued earlier, sociological reductionist theories reduce ideas to forms of cultural capital in order to explain success in intellectual fields. While the ideas of Talcott Parsons were influential to many members of the CCSNN, we lose the role played by Parsonian social theory in motivating and shaping discussions at the CCSNN if we reduce it to a source of cultural capital that members could cite to boost their own status.¹⁷ Rather, Parsons' ideas represented a set of ideas that CCSNN members were familiar with, but each struggling in their own way to move beyond. Furthermore, although many were critical of Parsonian theory, his ideas were taken seriously, and not monologically represented as a straw-man to be summarily dismissed. Dialogue with Parsonian social theory became a means of intellectual development for many members of the CCSNN.

The correspondence of Fallers with his mentor, the Chicago anthropologist Fred Eggan (1906-1991) illustrates this process. As a student of Anthropology at the University of Chicago, Fallers was introduced to a wide range of social thought through his teachers, including Shils, Eggan, and Robert Redfield. His first postdoc appointment at Princeton in 1953 brought Fallers in close contact with a group of scholars who were attempting to refine the Parsonian framework. Led by Marion Levy Jr., himself a student of Parsons, this group planned an ambitious research project. While at Princeton, Fallers enthusiastically wrote back to his mentor Eggan:

Last summer we worked through it [Levy, 1952], each of us applying sections of the scheme to his own stuff. We would now like to do a *full test of the scheme*. This would involve, essentially, attempting to apply the scheme to each of the societies of which we have some knowledge in an effort to determine whether the scheme really contains categories of *universal applicability*. We think this might take each of us perhaps two years. [...]. (Eggan Papers, 8.23. Fallers to Eggan, 12/30/1953. Emphasis added)

Eggan's response was presumably negative, as Fallers wrote again two weeks later:

¹⁷ Even more important than Parsons was the influence of Max Weber on members of the CCSNN (this can be seen patterns of citations in member works and has also been confirmed in discussion with members). And while Parsons' translation and interpretation of Weber (especially *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*) had an influence on many members of the CCSNN, he was not the sole route to Weber. For example, Rheinstein had studied under Weber before emigrating to the US. Also, Shils had translated a selection of Weber's essays, and was likely influenced by his teacher, the economist Frank Knight's, own translation and interpretation of Weber (1927). Thus, for many members of the CCSNN, there was no need to "de-Parsonize Weber" (Cohen et al., 1975).

Thanks for yours of January 27. Also for your comments on Marion's project. I realize the thing hasn't made a very good impression, partly because Parsons and his progeny give the impression of believing that no one else has ever had a good idea. I do think there's something in it, though. I'll get a copy of Marion's book off to you and perhaps we'll sometime have a chance to discuss it. (Eggans Papers 8.23. 1/31/1954, Fallers to Eggan).

Over the course of the 1950's and 1960's, Fallers conducted field research in East Africa and Turkey and his interest in Parsonian theory declined somewhat over these years. In the early 1970's, his friend and colleague at Berkeley, Rheinhard Bendix wrote to Fallers about his recent work, teasing Fallers over his occasional use of Parsonian concepts and ideas (Fallers Papers, 2.26). In his response to Bendix, Fallers stated that the set of lectures he was working on (eventually published as Fallers, 1974) would be critical of Parsons, but he gives a limited defense of Parsons:

In a way it's a pity to go after Parsons [referring to Fallers' own upcoming lectures], since he's been subjected to so much of the wrong kind of criticism, but it must be done, alas, because so many seem to think him the only alternative to vulgar Marxism and equally vulgar sociology of knowledge. [Parson's 1937] The Structure of Social Action was a great achievement. Sic transit gloria---. (Fallers Papers, 2.26, 3/15/1972).

Thus, while Fallers stayed closer to Parsonian theory than some of his colleagues at the CCSNN, his theoretical interest in Parsons followed a trajectory leading from excited adoption of Parsonian themes to their eventual partial rejection.

Susanne (PhD 1954) and Lloyd (PhD 1956) Rudolph, while graduate students in the Government Department at Harvard, had a similar experience with Parsonian theory. Susanne Rudolph describes her experience:

We [referring to her cohort of graduate students] all were Parsonians, for six months. The pattern variables [of Parsons et al., 1951] were so useful, you gave lectures about these new nations, about which many of us didn't know much, on which not much had been written. You needed this theoretical apparatus in order to give a good lecture, and there was Parsons ready to go. I remember putting the pattern variables on the blackboard for classes. But that didn't last very long. [...]Particulars of our field research made these categories seem very constraining. (Susanne Rudolph, interview)

By the 1960's, Susanne and Lloyd Rudolph's work would develop a stronger critique of the Parsonian approach to modernization, and their *The Modernity of Tradition* (1967) would become one of the

earliest critiques of modernization theory. Although this later position was rather critical of Parsonian approaches, they arrived at this position through sustained engagement with such ideas.

Apter's experience with Parsonian theory provides one more variation on this theme. Apter received his graduate training at Princeton, where he studied with the Parsonian sociologist Marion Levy Jr. (interview). Apter's dissertation work was on the transformation of the colonial Gold Coast into an independent Ghana under Kwame Nkrumah, and while it was clearly informed by Parsonian concepts, it was oriented to the particular problems faced by Ghana. Apter would later offer a critique of Parsonian theory similar to Fallers':

As a "map" moreover, one could use it [Parsonian structural-functionalism] to create one's own "conceptual scheme". Insofar as it was concerned with problems of modernization, development, and political democracy it focused on connections between stability, adaptation, and innovation. What it lacked was an effective strategy for field work (Apter, 2006: 7-8).

Apter's experience also follows the general trend from excitement in Parsonian theory to its qualified rejection.

Contra Collins' (1998) model of intellectual interaction, Parsonian theory at the CCSNN was not merely a source of cultural capital to be applied in interaction with the goal of maximizing emotional energy. The experiences of Apter and Fallers with Parsonian theory suggest a different story: instead of monologically adopting or refuting Parsonian theory, application of his ideas in new contexts demonstrated its limits and contradictions, which helped frame their own statements in social theory. Furthermore, because most members were familiar with Parsonian theory, it provided a ground for communication across disparate disciplines.

Disciplines and Areas: Perspectives in Dialogue

The relationship between the social science disciplines can be described as generally antagonistic: different disciplines seek to assert their jurisdiction over a class of phenomena (Abbott 1988; Sahlin 2009). Under such circumstances, to the extent that individuals within a discipline respond to the ideas of neighboring disciplines, the goal becomes disciplinary promotion and not sustained

dialogue. Ultimately, two factors helped make disciplinary structures more frequently support dialogue instead of disciplinary border-skirmishes at the CCSNN: the organizational structure of the University of Chicago, and the particular experiences and habits of thought that many members of the CCSNN had regarding disciplines.

At the University of Chicago, general trends in higher education, such as this enthusiasm for interdisciplinarity, were mediated through its particular organizational structure. Notably, the University was, and remains, structured as an undergraduate college encapsulated within a research university, such that undergraduate education is managed primarily by the College, and not directly by the academic departments. This not only reduces the tendency for inter-departmental conflict over undergraduate pedagogy, but as many have noted (MacAloon, 1992), teaching in the College itself is an opportunity for taking an interdisciplinary approach to problems. Furthermore, the academic departments are organized into “Divisions,” with all major decision-making granted to the Dean of the Division, with the result that departments tend to avoid bitter disputes over resources and policy (Bradburn, interview). Additionally, the traditional academic departments are supplemented by “Committees,” sub-Divisional units at the same organizational level as academic departments (some of which grant degrees, while others, such as the CCSNN, do not). Thus, at the University of Chicago intellectual interaction was not necessarily contained within department walls.¹⁸

While the University of Chicago presented opportunities for scholars to cross disciplinary boundaries, many members of the CCSNN had developed a stance toward disciplines that would encourage their thinking and working across boundaries. A cursory overview of their attitudes toward disciplines reveals several commonalities. Marc Galanter displays an attitude toward disciplines that was shared by many members of the CCSNN in his discussion of teaching the famous “Soc 2” course,:

The first commandment [of Soc 2] was not to take too seriously the claims of the disciplines to exclusive possession of any methods, subject matters, or theories. Indeed, one suspected that

¹⁸ Compare Emmett’s (2010) discussion of interdisciplinarity at Chicago’s Committee on Social Thought.

loyalty to these claims was purchased at the cost of disablement from rendering social life in its full complexity. We learned to cross disciplinary boundaries freely, but to respect them as convenient features of the landscape, not likely to be dissolved soon into a universal social science. We learned to appreciate the disciplines not as domains of knowledge, but as campaigns of inquiry attached to job markets. We were respectful of their accomplishment and disrespectful of their claims for turf. (Galanter,1992:248)

Marvin Zonis, whose career has included faculty positions in the College, the department of Political Science, and the Business School expresses a similar attitude toward disciplines: “Disciplines are like games—you know, like basketball or tennis. It really makes no sense to say that one is better than the other, although I might like one better myself” (personal communication). Donald Levine, also a graduate of the College, has explored the various meanings of “discipline,” especially the sense of “cultivated powers of mind” as opposed to exclusively meaning “fields of study defined by subject matter” (2006:233). Zolberg reports feeling at times like an “intruder,” because of his migration between the intellectual territories of sociology and political science (Zolberg, 2008:5). Geertz had a similar experience within his home discipline of anthropology: “...I came into anthropology from a background in the humanities and have never been fully deprogrammed, or even debriefed, never properly socialized. I have spent, by my count, no more than two and a half years in a purely anthropological setting in my half-century career, and much of that hiding from chairmen.” (Geertz, 2005:111). This brief survey of the attitudes of CCSNN members toward disciplines as organizational structures and as forms of knowledge reveals that, as a group, they attempted to avoid constraining their research within disciplinary boundaries.

In agreement with Collins’ (1998) model of interaction rituals and creativity, the emotional setting of intense interaction was important in making the CCSNN an exciting place. Because there was a general attitude of mutual respect at the CCSNN, disagreements could not be easily brushed aside, which led members to be self-critical and to find the merits in opposing arguments.¹⁹ However,

¹⁹ Compare Bakhtin’s (1986) statement on translation between cultures as creative, as well as Bateson (1972) on creativity and logical types.

interaction did not spontaneously produce intellectual excitement and innovation at the CCSNN.

Rather, a necessary factor was that such interaction take place in an environment in which disciplinary jurisdictions were not at stake, and among participants who were habitually interdisciplinary in their research and thinking.

Clifford Geertz: A Prominent Voice at the CCSNN

In terms of citations, Clifford Geertz has received more attention than any other member of the CCSNN. His influence was felt not only outside of the CCSNN, but his peers at the CCSNN also valued his presence and found in him an engaging partner for dialogue. Instead of attempting to explain Geertz' success in several intellectual fields, I will briefly examine characteristic features of his thought to uncover the role of dialogic understanding in his essays and in his communication with his peers.

Within his own writings, Geertz can be seen to have mastered the creative potential of dialogical understanding. Many of his influential essays adopt a simple heuristic: borrow a concept from a different intellectual tradition and then proceed by applying the concept to a new empirical area. His "Thick Description" (1973) essay takes the philosopher Gilbert Ryle's notion of thick description (1971), and then ruminates on its implications for anthropological research. Likewise, his essay on "The Bazaar Economy" (1978) borrows concepts from information economics (e.g. Akerlof 1970 et al.), and again, applies them to observations of markets in Morocco. To name one more example, his "Ideology as a Cultural System" (1964) takes the literary theorist and philosopher Kenneth Burke's (1941) distinction between semantic and poetic forms of meaning, and applies this understanding to the current debates over ideology, particularly in developing nations. In each case, Geertz adopts a promising idea from a neighboring discipline, and then instead of either defending or critiquing it, records his process of thinking through its implications to his own areas of interest.

While his writing takes a dialogical form, his interaction with his peers displays both the enthusiasm that dialogue can promote, as well as the inevitable miscommunication and unresolved

tensions that result from true dialogue. In 1968, Geertz returned to Sefrou, Morocco for an extended stay of fieldwork. At this point in his intellectual career, his attention was increasingly drawn to the problem of the basis of social and cultural organization in Sefrou. Geertz wrote to Fallers about his puzzlement over his failure to make sense of the local community in terms of familiar social science theory:

The real problem is how to conceptualize a social system which consists not of social groups in any real sense, but a number of powerful men moving in a sea of less powerful and not very closely tied into to one another. All the concepts we have—from lineage to class and back—aren't of much use here, yet it's not just a bunch of social atoms either. It's necessary to think anew, etc, and at the moment I don't quite know how to do it. I'm becoming even more *verstehen*-oriented than usual in the hope of finding some organizing ideas within the culture itself. I have some and I suppose I will get more, but so far it hasn't really crystallized and I feel like a man with a huge jigsaw puzzle spread out all over the floor with the uncomfortable suspicion that some malevolent being has really mixed up parts from a dozen different puzzles in one box—a collection of the world's best social facts. (Fallers Papers 6.7. Geertz to Fallers, 8/25/1968)

Searching for order in terms of inherited concepts, Geertz was unable to make sense of what he saw in Sefrou. Two months later, Geertz wrote again to Fallers, suggesting that the problem he saw could be framed as how to understand the ordering principles of cultural classifications:

The heterogeneity, suffice it to say, is almost entirely in terms of cultural classifications, not in terms of either customs (there are almost no really important differences) or social structural position (which doesn't coincide with the lines of classificatory distinction at all or virtually not. You probably don't believe this, but that is only because you have been miseducated.) The question is then, how are the classifications formed, what are they, how are they used, and what difference to they make? Please answer by return post. (Fallers Papers 6.7. Geertz to Fallers, 10/8/1968)

In his response, Fallers questioned Geertz' assumption that prior social theory did not apply in Morocco, suggesting that Geertz may be misreading the theory he critiqued:

I'm certainly willing to believe that Moroccan heterogeneity is in terms of cultural classification, not customs or social structure and that it doesn't correspond with the latter, but the statement itself doesn't tell me very much. I wouldn't expect the above elements to coincide—if they did, the society would be in an extraordinarily static state. If you thought otherwise, you were miseducated. (Fallers Papers 6.7. Fallers to Geertz, 12/2/1968)

Geertz' response suggests his intention to clarify his concepts, as well as his frustration in his inability to communicate with a close friend and colleague:

You didn't understand my point about cultural categories and social forms, which is understandable, as I am unable still to formulate it, but dismaying, because if I can't get you to see what I am driving at I haven't much chance with the world at large. (Fallers Papers 6.7. Geertz to Fallers 1/29/1969)

Although their correspondence provides a glimpse into the dialogue between Geertz and Fallers, their professional and personal relationship cannot be adequately summarized here. But what is apparent is the sincere effort to communicate novel ideas, and the frustration that inevitably results from miscommunication, even among two close colleagues. In the fall of 1970, Geertz began his stay at IAS, where he continued to formulate new frameworks to apply to cultural analysis, resulting in his monumental "Thick Description" essay. It is not clear whether Geertz ever fully convinced Fallers of the merits of his approach to culture, but it is clear that his conversations with his peers played an influential role in the genesis of his ideas.

CODA: DIALOGICAL HISTORY

To conclude, the CCSNN was an exciting place that promoted innovation because it stimulated dialogue, particularly across disciplinary, theoretical, and area boundaries.²⁰ The interaction that took place at the CCSNN was not mere debate (i.e., the defense of one position at the expense of another), but true dialogue: open-ended and inherently creative. While the concerns of the CCSNN and its moment in world history have passed, it remains as a model for how to conduct social science inquiry and fruitfully engage in dialogue.

In order to produce this history of the CCSNN, I have moved against the common sociological approaches to the history of the social sciences. Neither the whig history of ongoing social science research, nor the sociological reductionist approach were capable of capturing the notable qualities of

²⁰ Compare Bordogna's (2008) discussion of creativity within the thought of one individual, William James, as a response to moving across boundaries.

the CCSNN precisely because they rely on a monologic representation of texts; only a dialogical history that places the texts of social scientists in their context can adequately represent dialogue.

Admittedly, the dialogical history I have produced here is sparse and only touches on select moments and factors that influenced the CCSNN. My purpose has been solely to demonstrate the importance of a dialogical history, and for this purpose, such a thin history suffices. However, a deeper understanding of particular moments at the CCSNN and the intellectual trajectories of its members requires closer attention to particular ideas, actions, and texts.

Finally, this paper offers a challenge to the sociology of knowledge. Over 80 years after Karl Mannheim's influential synthesis of trends in the sociology of knowledge (1929), sociologists continue to rely on an untenable theory of knowledge in which ideas are represented as things which are caused by sociologically concrete forces. The sociology of knowledge is thus blind to the entire movement of pragmatism, semiotics, and linguistic anthropology. The tendency within the sociology of knowledge to draw causal arrows between ideas and social forces reproduces a very 19th century philosophy of knowledge; Geertz has summarized this by saying that the social sciences: "for all their topical and practical modernity, live philosophically not in this [i.e., the 20th] century but in the last, possessed by fears of metaphysical ghosts..." (1980:135). A refined sociology of knowledge—one that understands knowledge not as a thing, but as an active and creative process in a particular situation (Dewey 1938)—requires a consideration of the qualities, significations, and most of all, practical consequences, of texts; my emphasis on dialogue has been one move in this direction.

Figure 1: Timeline of Members of the Committee for the Comparative Study of New Nations, 1960-1977*

Last	First	Discipline	60-61	61-62	62-63	63-64	64-65	65-66	66-67	67-68	68-69	69-71	71-73	73-75	75-77
Shils	Edward	Sociology/Social Thought													
Apter	David	Political Science													
Anderson	C. Arnold	Education/Sociology													
Rheinstein	Max	Law													
Ginsburg	Norton S.	Geography													
Fallers	Lloyd A.	Anthropology													
Nash	Manning	Anthropology/Business													
Rossi	Peter H.	Sociology/NORC													
Thrupp	Sylvia	History													
Geertz	Clifford	Anthropology													
Zolberg	Aristide	Political Science													
LeVine	Robert A.	Hum. Dev./Anthro.													
Marriott	McKim	Anthropology													
Yalman	Nur	Anthropology													
Binder	Leonard	Political Science													
Janowitz	Morris	Sociology/Business													
Johnson	Harry G.	Economics													
Jones-Quartey	K. A. B.	Extra-mural studies													
Cohn	Bernard	Anthropology													
Foster	Philip	Education													
Kahan	Arcadius	Economics													
Levine	Donald	Sociology/Social Sciences													
Spiro	Melford	Anthropology													
Polk	William	History													
Rudolph	Lloyd I.	Political Science													
Rudolph	Susanne	Soc. Sci./Political Science													
Singer	Milton B.	Anthropology/Social Science													
Galanter	Marc	Social Sciences/Law													
Zonis	Marvin	Soc. Sci/Pol. Sci./Psych./Bus.													
Azrael	Jeremy	Political Science													
Bennigsen	Alexandre	History/Slavic Studies													
Cawelti	John	English													
Coatsworth	John	History													
Forman	Shepard	Anthropology/Social Science													
Greenstone	David	Political Science													
Harris	Neil	History													
Hellie	Richard	History													
Schmitter**	Phillippe	Political Science													
Scott	Donald	History/Social Science													
Sewell**	William	History/Social Science													
Smith	Raymond	Anthropology													
Wheatley	Paul	Geography/Social Thought													
Katz	Friedrich	History													
Bradburn**	Norman	B. Sci./Bus./Public Policy													
Taub	Richard	Sociology													

Note: This table was compiled from the Graduate Announcements, which are published one year in advance of the period they cover. I have attempted to correct all errors and omissions by confirming with members and other sources.

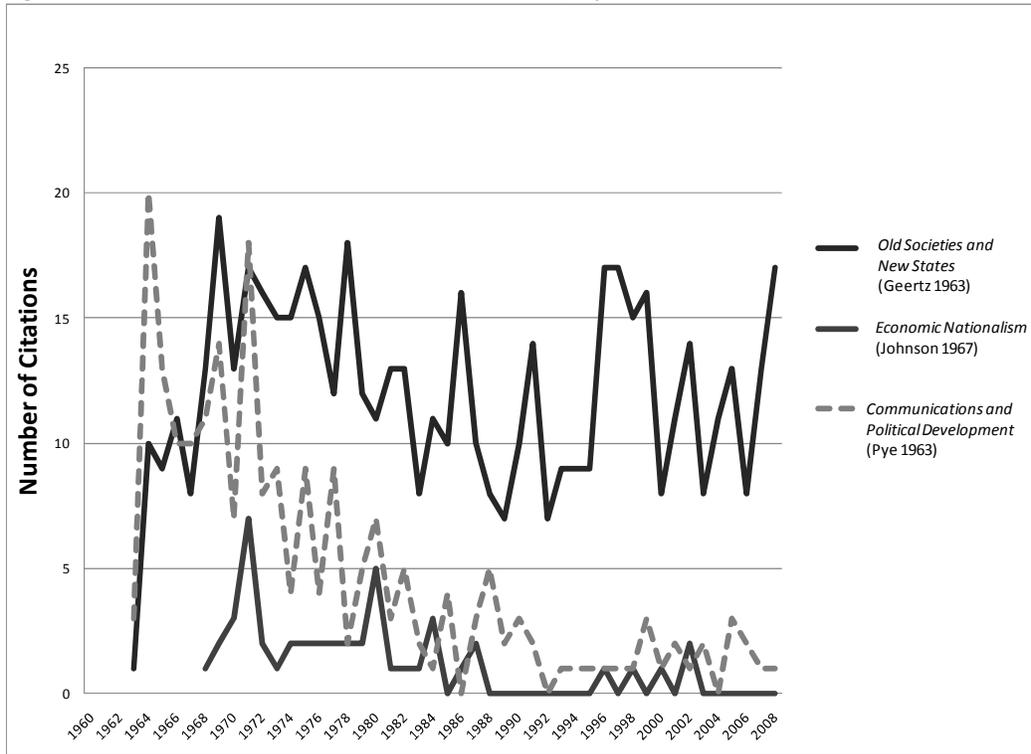
*Committee operations ceased in 1975, although official University of Chicago documents listed the personnel for the 1975-1977 period.

**While listed as members of the CCSNN in the Graduate Announcements, these members do not recall having a substantial affiliation with the CCSNN.

Figure 2: Three Visions of the History of Social Science

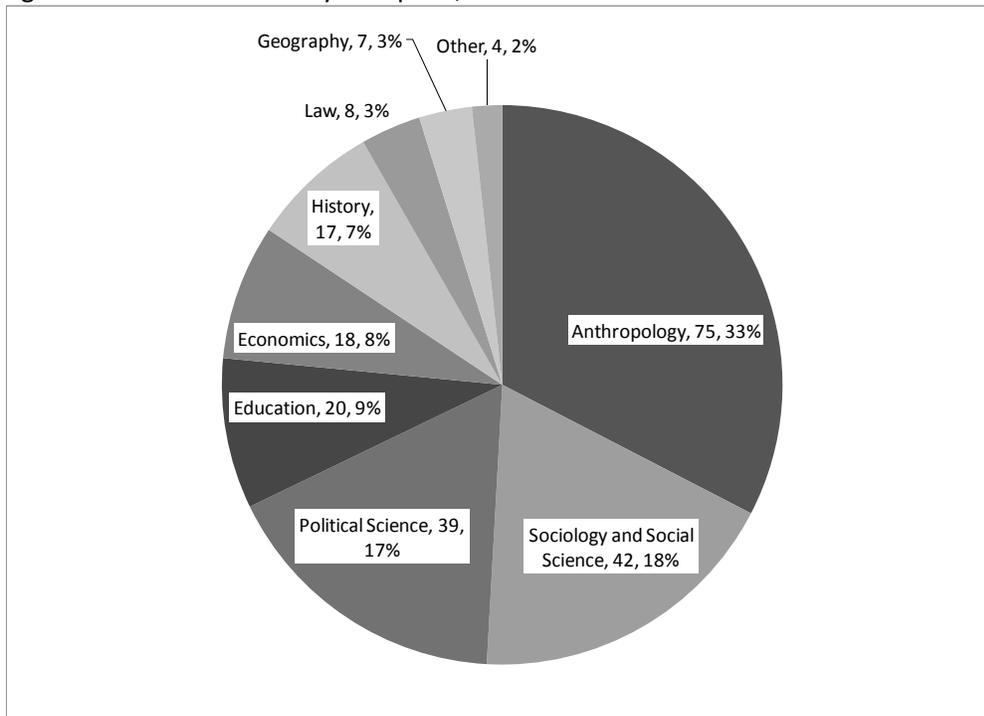
	Whig History	Sociological Reductionist History	Dialogical History
What are texts?	<i>Texts are monologic. They are closed semantic statements that can be analyzed discretely and in separation from their context.</i>		<i>Texts are dialogic: their semantic aspects cannot be divorced from their pragmatic aspects (i.e., use in social relationships) nor their general context.</i>
Perspective toward texts	Internal	External	Text-in-context
Partisanship of historian	Whig	"Objective" scientist	Reflexive; aware of how historian's perspective influences the representation of reported speech
Vision of historical process	Teleological	Structural/causal	Open, contingent
What is history for?	To understand better the advantages of the present.	A source of data to test theories.	Human self-knowledge (Collingwood 1946). In particular, understanding what social science is and how it proceeds in order to understand its possibilities.

Figure 3: Number of Citations to Edited Volume, by Year



*Data from ISI Web of Science. Geertz (1963) and Johnson (1967) are both CCSNN publications. Pye (1963) is presented for comparison.

Figure 4: Personnel Years by Discipline, 1961-1977



*Data compiled from figure 1: a "personnel year" is measured by the number of years each individual was a member of the CCSNN. Thus, a geographer that was a member for 2 years would contribute 2 personnel years to the total for the discipline of Geography.

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All archival material is from the University of Chicago Library, Special Collections Research Center. I have used the format of Box # followed by Folder # for all citations (e.g., 3.2 for box 3, folder 2).

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- Fred Eggan Papers.
- Lloyd Fallers Papers.
- Clifford Geertz Papers. (The Geertz papers were not fully archived at the time of my visit, in 2009, and as such the box and folder ordering may change).
- Morris Janowitz Papers.
- Robert Redfield Papers.
- Max Rheinstein Papers.

Interviews

All interviews were conducted with IRB supervision. In addition to these interviews, email correspondence was conducted with: Leonard Binder, Marc Galanter, Lloyd Rudolph, Melford Spiro, Nur Yalman, and Aristide Zolberg.

- David Apter. 5/12/2009
- Norman Bradburn. 4/28/2009
- Neil Harris. 7/2/2009
- Donald Levine. 3/26/2009
- Robert LeVine. 2/8/2010
- McKim Marriott. 3/17/2009
- Susanne Rudolph. 6/12/2009
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