Area Studies and the Discipline: Contrast or Complement?
Rana Mitter. 29 October 2009

- The nature of the controversy
  Why is there a perceived divide?
  Who are the players?

- The role of theory and universalization
  Modernization theory and area studies
  Marx (and Spencer)
  The legacy of the Cold War
  “Us looking at them”?

- How area studies helps us refine disciplinary study
  o Case 1: The state
  o Case 2: The international system

- When theory is not enough
  Language as a lens for understanding
  History

Reading suggestions
[These can be read online via the e-journals service]

(1) Robert H. Bates, “Area Studies and the Discipline: A Useful Controversy?” in

(2) See Special Edition of PS: Political Science and Politics (Vol 34:4, 2001) – Area Studies
special

Read the introductory essay -
John W. Harbeson, Cynthia McClintock and Rachel Dubin, ““Area Studies and the
34:4:787-788

Then read one or two of the special essays on East Asia, Latin America, Africa, etc.