Towards a Research Agenda for Public Policy in the ‘Asian Century’

Professor Helen Sullivan  Director, Melbourne School of Government
Dr Sara Bice  Research Fellow, Melbourne School of Government
Towards a Research Agenda for Public Policy in the ‘Asian Century’

Professor Helen Sullivan  
Director  
Melbourne School of Government

Dr Sara Bice  
Research Fellow  
Melbourne School of Government

With research assistance from Ms Angela Merriam  
Asia Institute & Melbourne School of Government

Melbourne School of Government Conference  
9-10 December 2013, The Langham, Southbank, Melbourne
Public policy in the ‘Asian Century’: Key questions

- What do we mean by the ‘Asian Century’?

- Relationship to vital policy concerns, strategies and aims?

- Influences? Transformations? Revolution?

- Issues, aspects, cases to consider?
Current state of discussion in the literature

- 5-year ISI impact factor > 1.0
- 12 year period
- 5 leading mainstream public policy journals: 52 articles
- 5 leading comparative public policy journals: 233 articles
Current state of discussion in the literature

“Asian Century”
“Pacific Century”
“Asia-Pacific Century”
“Rise of Asia”
“Asia”
“Rise of China”
“Rise of India”
“China”
“India”
Current state of discussion in the literature: Types of articles

- Globalisation and public policy
- Dynamic processes
- Multi-perspective approach
  - Foreign policy
  - Development & Development Policy
Current state of discussion in the literature: Public Admin 91:2, 2013

- Lack of Western scholarly writing on Asian public administration (esp. China)
- Language barriers
- Relative newness of PA as scholarly field in China
- Lack of ‘robust and appropriate’ methods?
  - Caution against emphasis on positivist approach
- Study of Chinese PA = rapidly growing field
- Almost 3,000 articles in top 6 journals (1998-2008)
Questioning Dominant Approaches / Positions

Traditional approach

Critiques of Anglo-Saxon dominance

Context-specific public administration

Globally-relevant public administration

Generic skills for a globalised public service

Asian public administration

Asia literacy
Developing an ‘Asia capability’

• Asia capability
  or

• Generic skills for a globalised public service?
Towards a research agenda...

Dimensions
- Time
- Space
- Degrees of freedom

Domains
- Values
- Institutions
- Ideas
Towards a Research Agenda for Public Policy in the ‘Asian Century’

Professor Helen Sullivan  
Director  
Melbourne School of Government

Dr Sara Bice  
Research Fellow  
Melbourne School of Government

@Government_UoM