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## On Dragons, Flowers, and Constructing a Science: An Exchange

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**I**n the following exchange Professor Howard Gillman draws our attention to the importance of contextual and culturally specific understandings in studies of law and change. In his comments he suggests that categorical data employed in quantitative research cannot adequately represent the actions of judges and others involved in applying (or complying with) law. He uses as an example a recent article published in the *Review* in which Neal Tate and Stacia Haynie examined the impact of the Marcos dictatorship on the work of the Philippine Supreme Court.<sup>1</sup> In that article, the authors drew on a framework for describing the work of appellate courts developed by Martin Shapiro, identifying several dimensions of judicial function, operationalizing them and employing sophisticated statistical techniques to detect the impact of the changes in political regime. The questions raised by Professor Gillman and the responses of Professors Tate and Haynie have significance both for research on our own legal institutions and, *a fortiori*, for our efforts to understand legal institutions of other societies.

—Ed.

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<sup>1</sup> C. Neal Tate & Haynie, "Authoritarianism and the Function of Courts: A Time Series Analysis of the Philippine Supreme Court, 1961-1987," 27 *Law & Society Review* 707 (1993).