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Biray Kolluoglu-Kirli

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# From Orientalism to Area Studies

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BIRAY KOLLUOGLU-KIRLI

Bogazici University

## INTRODUCTION

United States President George W. Bush's 2002 State of the Union speech, following the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11 the previous year, represents the solidification of a discourse marked by naked aggression against the "un-civilized" world. In that speech, months-long hatred and frustration culminated in the delineation of the "axis of evil." Both the American president's and other government representatives' public discourse incessantly evoked images of "civilization" being under attack and being threatened and, hence, in need of saving. In the reigning understanding, civilization, without any adjective in front of it, refers to the "Western civilization" and is defined in opposition to the "non-Western," and if we carry the antithetical reasoning to its logical consequence, to the "un-civilized" world. The relationship of hierarchy and further-refined definitions of these categories were nakedly spelled out by the Italian prime minister, Silvio Berlusconi, who, in late September 2001, unabashedly proclaimed the superiority of the Western civilization over the Islamic world. I am beginning this article by reiterating these well-known contemporary observations to underline one point: Berlusconi, Bush, and

others can invoke these categories of good/evil, civilized/uncivilized, Western/Eastern without any hesitation precisely because they represent the tip of an iceberg whose enormous body itself goes deep in the ocean of Western epistemology and the imaginary.

In this article I will scrutinize layers of this iceberg in the form of a discussion of the structural elements and institutional framework of Orientalism and area studies, with special emphasis on the latter. In order to explain the institutional framework and the development of area studies, three issues must be taken into account. Firstly, area studies needs to be understood in its relation to Orientalism in terms of it being the heir to this academic discipline, which was the nineteenth-century European way of dealing with the non-West. Although, as we will see in the following pages, Orientalism and area studies have discursive similarities, and they form a continuum in the organization of the knowledge on the non-West, this is not a relationship of direct heritage. Borrowing Harootunian's formulation inspired by Benjamin, we can say that area studies constituted "not a copy but another original, an afterlife and an afterimage" (153). Thus, the second issue that must be taken into consideration is the novel forms that this heritage takes under the geopolitics of the post-World War II era. The third issue will be the distinctive and disruptive places that these two disciplines hold within the organization of the social sciences.

Thus, in the following pages we will have a closer look at the structural elements and institutional settings of the nineteenth-century Orientalism of Europe, and twentieth-century area studies instituted in the United States. We will try to figure out the transformations that took place as the study of the non-Western world was crossing the Atlantic to build an entirely new home for itself under new institutional settings and novel learning methods and techniques on the same discursive grounds—with ultimately parallel objectives.

## I

We start by discussing the last issue listed above. Orientalism and area studies hold peculiar places in the historical structuration of academic frag-

mentation and disciplinization of the social sciences in terms of the definition of their subject matter. That is, no other social science discipline sets out to identify its content (or draws its boundaries) via geography or by exclusion. The social science disciplines, as we know them today, started to take shape in the second half of the nineteenth century. The division of labor among the social sciences is such that the three nomothetic social science disciplines—namely, sociology, economics, and political science—correspond to the divisions of life spheres in capitalist society and its dominant ideology, liberalism. The fourth discipline, idiographic history, began to be understood as the study of “what actually happened.”<sup>1</sup> Political science, sociology, and economics focused on extracting universally valid laws in their respective spheres through empirical observations. Their purpose was to explain human behavior and to account for the change that was shaking the societies on whose territories these social science disciplines were flourishing. History was to be the account of a past, with the aim of finding the sources of the inherent dynamics of the potential for change that European societies possessed (Wallerstein et al. 1996). Thus, at first sight, it may seem that the subject matter of these disciplines was also geographically determined—namely, Europe and North America. Yet it is not space, but time that is the key to the epistemology of social sciences. Progress was the source of fascination as, simultaneously, a haunting spatial specificity of the West got totally lost. Hence, the implicit understanding persists that travel to Asia or Africa is felt like travel in time (Fabian 1983). In other words, social sciences could make universal claims valid over space and time: space being the universalized West, time being modern-capitalist temporality. The non-West was expelled from both.

The fifth academic discipline, anthropology, at first sight also seems to define its subject matter geographically, as argued by Wallerstein (1991). I would like to argue that this cleavage needs to be reformulated. Anthropology was defined to be the study of the history of societies and cultures without writing. That is to say, even though empirically anthropological studies have mainly dealt with the non-Western world, this was not necessarily the consequence of the ontological premises of this discipline. Since it was the study of people before writing, by definition these societies could

have been located anywhere on the surface of the globe, and since its methods were suitable for understanding social processes in the absence of written evidence, anthropological research could be applied to any time period. And this turned out to be the case. After the traditional subject of anthropological study escaped anthropologists in the second half of the twentieth century, the focus of anthropological studies shifted temporarily and spatially (see Marcus 2000; Appadurai 1996). More importantly, though, like the nomothetic social sciences, anthropology makes universal claims. This becomes most evident in structural anthropology, which aims at discovering the unchanging structures of human societies; but it is also true for the other trends in anthropology, insofar as the premise is that the study of the primitive “peoples” will shed light on the unknown line of human evolution. Thus, anthropology is the study of the childhood of mankind, the lost memories of human civilization.

In this structuration, the sixth discipline of the social sciences, Orientalism, holds a rather peculiar place. Its subject matter is geographically determined: the non-Western world. Its findings, contrary to other disciplines, is exclusive rather than inclusive. Orientalists’ findings and accounts are not generalizable—i.e., they do not have the potential to be valid anywhere else, other than in the non-Western world. An Orientalist is the political scientist, sociologist, and economist of “Oriental societies,” or he is none; he is usually the student of frozen structures that have been hanging out there for centuries.

This division of labor survived and was further consolidated after the Second World War with the exception of Orientalism. Orientalism disappeared from the scene, leaving its place as the study of the non-Western world to area studies, which emerged, quickly institutionalized and tremendously expanded, in the second half of the twentieth century—though in a radically new form, with new content, methods, and techniques. To the demise of Orientalism we will return later.

The subject matter of area studies is also defined by geography. The map of the globe is in front of the area expert who divides, classifies, and categorizes the non-Western world according to the economic and political interests and priorities of the United States, under the guidance and support of

governmental agencies. Thereupon, historians, sociologists, economists, political scientists, geographers, and anthropologists unite their efforts to further the knowledge about all parts of the non-Western world toward the maintenance of the American hegemony in the new world arena marked by “decolonization” and the Cold War.

Area studies played a disruptive role in the organization of social knowledge production in two distinct but interrelated ways: structural and epistemological. The first is that by challenging the literary and textual orientation of Orientalism as an academic discipline, area studies initiated the flood of interdisciplinarity that came to dominate scholarly tradition of the social sciences in the last quarter of the twentieth century. Area studies brought home the problems and deficiencies that derive from academic compartmentalization and opened up the way for the emergence of women’s studies and ethnic studies, which also rose up with claims that their subject matters should be handled with an interdisciplinary approach (Wallerstein 1995, 42).

The second disruption is the radical epistemological critique that emerged in reaction to knowledge produced under area studies departments. As is well known, area studies operated with the conceptual framework and theoretical premises of the modernization approach, and were development-oriented. Such work generated a rigorous critique, mostly from within the “areas” themselves, resulting in the emergence of new approaches to “Third World development” such as “dependency school” and the world-systems perspective. The discursive heritage that area studies took over from Orientalism again led to reactions in the form of postcolonial critique, and hence postcolonial studies. While the former resulted in the attempt to unthink the spatial premises of a world divided into regions, further divided by nation-states, the latter reproduced the cartographic imaginary of area studies. Postcoloniality’s “unconscious” is scarred by the way in which area studies organized knowledge (see Harootunian 2002).

## II

Let us now turn to Orientalism with the aim of understanding the discursive premises at work in the study of the non-Western world. When we read-

ily use the concept *Orientalism*, actually we are referring to several interdependent meanings of the concept. Following Said (1978), Orientalism can be discussed and analyzed as a discourse, “as the corporate institution dealing with the Orient—dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient” (2-3). Orientalism as a discourse depends on a certain mode of thinking derived from the ontological and epistemological distinction made between the East and the West; and finally, both are made possible by (and make possible) Orientalism as an academic discipline, a tradition of disciplined learning whose studies revolve around Oriental cultures, histories, and languages (Said, 2-3).

Orientalism is organically linked to European capitalist expansion. It is a distinctively European approach to the non-Western world, taking its form and content from the historical process of European capitalist expansion and the colonization that accompanied it. That is, Orientalism:

. . . may be seen as a complex and growing phenomenon deriving from the overall historical trend of modern European expansion and involving a whole set of progressively expanding institutions, a created and cumulative body of theory and practice, a suitable ideological superstructure within an apparatus of complicated assumptions, beliefs, images, literary productions and rationalizations. (Jalal al-'Azm 1981, 5)

However, in its initial stages, religious ambitions and interests were more influential than political and economic ones in the development of Orientalism. Thus, Christian missionaries and travelers' accounts also played significant roles in the consolidation of Orientalism. Christian missionaries were writing to discredit Islam and contrast it with Christianity by giving the upper hand to Christianity in this comparison. The interest of missionaries reached its peak during the first half of the nineteenth century and continued into the early twentieth century, with people like S. Zwemmer, H. Lammens, D. B. McDonald, M. A. Palacios, C. De Foucoult, M. Watt and K. Cragg—from Belgium, France, Holland, Spain, and Britain—who were

writing with a very overt interest in the dissemination of Christianity in the new territories of European influence. Orientalism of the colonial era took over this heritage, though in a more “secularized” form (Hussain, Olson, and Qureishi 1984, 7). Interest in the outer world at large was also nourished by travelers’ accounts, which were popular during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Travelers’ tales played an important role in shaping national predilections and national character. One expression of such interest, as cited by Kiernan (1981), is the collecting of “exotic curiosities” (16), the expression of which we find in the exhibitions of the Orient in museums.

Orientalism came into formal existence with the decision of the Church Council of Vienna in 1312 to establish a series of chairs in Arabic, Greek, Hebrew, and Syriac at Paris, Oxford, Bologna, Avignon, and Salamanca; this was followed by, for instance, the establishment of Arabic studies in Cambridge in 1632 and Oxford in 1636, the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1784, the *École de Langues Orientales* in Paris in 1795 (Said 1978, 50). However, it was towards the end of the nineteenth century that “these haphazard and independent pursuits had given way to more rigorous methods in keeping with the developing scientific consciousness necessary of the times” (Hussain, Olson, and Qureishi 1984, 8).

The colonies and their need to be administered provided ample impetus for the full-fledged development and institutionalization of Orientalism. While from 1815 to 1914 direct European colonial domination expanded from about 35 percent of the earth’s surface to about 85 percent of it (Said, 41), the same period witnessed the remarkable expansion of Orientalist institutions, scholars, and travel writings. That is to say, as well summarized by Said:

Under the general heading of the knowledge of the Orient and within the umbrella of Western hegemony over the Orient during the period from the end of the eighteenth century, there emerged a complex Orient suitable for study in the Academy, for the display in the museum, for reconstruction in the colonial office, for theoretical illustration in anthropological, biological, linguistic, racial, and historical theses about mankind and the universe, for instances of economic and sociological theories of development, revolution, cultural personality or religious character. (7)

Orientalism did not only make the Orient knowable and learnable but, more crucially, governable. European interests in the Orient were both created and made realizable by Orientalism. This aspect becomes most explicit with Napoleon's Egyptian campaign, a "turning point for orientalism" (Fück 1962), which is the point when Orientalism reaches its maturity as a body of knowledge that could be directly put into use for both conquest and colonial administration. Napoleon's project pioneered those European "encounters in which the orientalist's special expertise was put directly to functional colonial use (Said 1978, 80). And, as more material through more intensive contact found its way to Europe, "Oriental studies since the French Revolution had been breaking free of the bonds of theology" (Fück 1962, 304).

After Napoleon, the language of Orientalism changed radically. Its descriptive realism was upgraded and went from being a mere style of representation to more of a means of creation (Said 1978, 87). The International Congresses of Orientalists, the first of which convened in Paris in 1873 and was followed by 28 others, with the last convening in 1973, formed one of the vital and dynamic institutional settings for gathering and consolidating the efforts of Orientalists from various European countries. A quotation from Samuel Birch's inaugural address at the second meeting held in London in 1874 summarizes well the generative theme of the congress: "In this country the bonds which hold us to our Asiatic Empire, the links that connect our commerce with the nations of the East, have rendered the intimate acquaintance with the languages, thought, history, and movements of these nations not a luxury, but a necessity" (Birch 1876, 3).

So for Orientalism, in its mature stage, knowledge about the Orient was significant only if it could be used to Western advantage; and in the production of this knowledge, the East served only as a theater for imperialist ambition or artistic fantasy (Irwin 1981, 101). The Orient was to be known in order to administer, to direct, to utilize it. It was the instrument for achievement of European purposes: political, economic, and cultural (Said 1978).

The subject of Orientalism is the past of Oriental societies and cultures, which is studied mainly through two aspects: language and religion. The study of the past is significant and telling. It is studied not as a means of deciphering social evolution or development patterns, but as a subject mat-

ter that is presumed to be able to give an account of the present without almost any mediation. Within this perspective, both language and religion are studied as frozen entities that are capable of encompassing the knowledge of the society under concern. For example, the study of Islam for the “Near Orient” is very illustrative. Islam, understood to have a monolithic structure, is presumed to be not only a religion, but a way of life, a way of thinking, a way of administration—in short, everything. It is studied through the Qur’an and other religious texts. The textual study of this unified vision of Islam is seen as the sole key to the region, its past and present. In other words, a study of history as a mode of historical approach is absent; and, in this way, Oriental societies are not only denied a dynamic past, but a present as well. They are conceptually refrigerated.

In sum, Orientalism is one of the happiest and most durable marriages of power and knowledge housed under the unequal relationship between the West and the East, one stemming from the structure of the capitalist world-system. It is a self-validating, closed discourse of “othering,” reducing the complexity of the East to a definable order. It is the incorporation of the different through the epistemological and ontological distinction made between the East and the West, and a host of other derivative distinctions, forming the basis of analysis and explanations that are put into the direct use of the West’s political and economic will over the East.

### III

In the contemporary world, the traditional Orientalist is an extinct figure; classical Oriental studies departments, Oriental societies do not exist anymore, and no more Oriental congresses convene. How, then, did this powerful and highly respected scholarly tradition and academic discipline disappear? What happened to the knowledge produced under it, the images and the constructions that it helped to create about the Orient, the assumptions and theories it had shaped through almost two centuries?

Abdel-Malek (1963) lists three apparent reasons to account for the crisis that shook the edifice of traditional Orientalism to its foundations: namely, the emergence of national liberation movements in the colonies, the success

of which resulted in the decolonization of these territories and the appearance of socialist states. Especially after World War II, Oriental experts, but more so governments and policy makers, realized the time lag between Orientalism and the material under study—and more importantly, between the conceptions, methods, and techniques in the human and social sciences and those used by Orientalism (112). Abdel-Malek puts it very finely: “[F]or the time being, the crisis strikes at the heart of Orientalism: since 1945, it has been not only the ‘terrain’ that has escaped it, but also the ‘men,’ until yesterday the ‘object’ of study, and henceforth, sovereign ‘subjects’” (104). Lucian W. Pye, one of the forerunners of area studies, although not naming Orientalism *per se*,<sup>2</sup> reiterates this point in his attempt to more closely ally area studies with other social science disciplines: “American Higher Education in the 1950s and the 1960s coincided with the discovery that the classical European traditions and perspectives could no longer describe the richness of the real world” (Pye 1975, 4).

World War II is singled out as the prime reason for the drastic turn that area studies took in the United States.<sup>3</sup> Palat (2000), rightly acknowledging that all knowledge is “tinged by the conditions of its production,” underlines the remarkably salient relationship between the emergence and development of area studies and the rise and consolidation of the United States’ hegemony (65). The umbilical cord between power and knowledge is not this unabashedly out in the open in any other field of knowledge (see Cumings [2000] for a well-documented analysis). It is quite clear that the war made explicit the need for personnel with a fair knowledge of different regions of the world and their languages. And this need could no longer be satisfied by what was offered by Orientalist studies. The 1943 report of the Committee on World Regions of the Social Science and Research Council highlights this point very clearly: “The present war has focused attention as never before upon the entire world. . . . We lack the regional knowledge now required; and traditional curricula and methods of instruction have left inert much of such information as we possess.” What was needed were experts who could combine their technical skills and regional knowledge with “technical proficiency” (quoted in Wallerstein 1995, 1). Even the enthusiasts and initiators of area studies who were trying to find a less obviously strategic and less

politically oriented ground for the pursuit of knowledge of the non-Western world reluctantly conceded that “the war brought acceleration in and enthusiasm for area studies” (Hall 1947; Wagley 1948). During the war, all available “specialists” were gathered, and the armed forces undertook frantic training programs. In 1943, under the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP), language and area training courses were established at 55 universities, and at ten other universities they were founded under the Civil Affairs Training Schools (CATS) (Fenton 1947, vi).

Although the war-triggered programs such as the ASTP and CATS were demobilized after the war, they continued to serve as established devices, and provided solid grounds for the new course that Orientalist studies had embarked upon in the United States. The manpower mobilized during the war continued to rigorously pursue their “war-time mission” in civil academic settings. Therefore, it is not surprising at all to note that most of those who were to become leading figures in the field later had served during the war as area experts for the army (Naft 1993).

The immediate postwar years witnessed a concentrated effort to establish area studies programs and open up a secure place for the study of the non-Western world in American higher education. In 1946 the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) set up the Committee on World Area Research, whose main goal was “to determine the extent to which the facilities in the universities could meet the anticipated government requirements for area trained personnel and special training programs” (Johnson and Tucker 1975, 6).

With this aim, the SSRC appointed Robert B. Hall, the chairman of the committee, to make a survey of the existing situation of area studies in the United States.<sup>4</sup> His findings, comments, and recommendations are central to understanding the future development of area studies. Hall’s survey showed that in this period, the best-established area was Latin American studies, followed by Far Eastern and Russian studies, which were newly emerging. There was very little organized or group interest in the Near East, Africa, the Indian world, or Southeast Asia (Hall 1947, 9). Hall enthusiastically proposed that this gap be filled immediately. He was self-conscious about the role of the United States on the world scene as a hegemonic power and drew a par-

allel with Britain of the nineteenth century, emphasizing that when they were rigorously involved with their colonies over the “seven seas,” they had to overcome their provincialism by expanding their knowledge of other cultures. He asked, “[I]s there not a similarity in our own position today? Do we need ‘those differently colored glasses’ to live wisely in our ‘one world?’” (14). According to him, the development of area studies was not only an academic but also a national need, and thus, universities were in a way obliged to undertake this national responsibility. He underscored the lack of personnel and material. What they wanted was to establish libraries and train experts as quickly as possible. He recommended that priority be given to certain areas in the early stages, but that the ultimate aim should be “to take care of all areas”; “we should move rapidly toward filling out the map” (83).

The world map was open to scrutiny before the United States. Despite a lack of resources and infrastructure, there was enough consciousness and willingness to promote knowledge about different parts of the world that were (or were to become) scenes of the realization of U.S. political and economic interests. Now the world was to be known—not to be directly administered, as was the case for European imperialism, but to be ruled indirectly, more subtly, as necessitated by American hegemony.

Consequently, the SSRC recommended that the government continue with the Second World War process of investment in language and area studies. In order for this and similar recommendations to be realized, what was crucial at this stage was funding. One of the major sources came from the government when in 1958 the National Defense Education Act’s (NDEA) Title VI provided universities with good sums of money for the establishment of language institutions and centers to ensure trained manpower of sufficient quality and quantity to meet the national defense needs of the United States (Pye, 5). This new federal program brought a significant boom to area studies. In its first six years, \$34 million was spent for non-Western academic programs, \$11 million for improving instruction at language and area centers, \$7 million for research and curriculum development, and \$16 million for student stipends (Johnson and Tucker 1975, 7). The NDEA provided around \$206 million between 1958 and 1973, of which \$68.5 million

went to around 107 language and area centers. The centers receiving NDEA funding produced 35,000 bachelor's degrees, 14,700 master's degrees, and over 5,000 doctorates. (Pye 1975, 12). Another important component of U.S. government support for area specialists was the Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowship Program. A survey carried out in the late 1970s shows that since its inception in 1958, FLAS has provided funding for over 20,000 graduate students (McDonnell 1983, v).

Besides governmental support, area studies received significant amounts of funding from various foundations. The initial support came from the Rockefeller Foundation, which provided around \$1 million for the development of language and area studies between 1934 and 1942. Rockefeller support increased dramatically during World War II in order to provide training and research programs for the military. The second foundation money to enter the scene came from the Carnegie Foundation, which provided around \$2.5 million from 1947 to 1951 in the form of grants to universities and research councils. The third major actor, the Ford Foundation, proved to be the most enduring and the most generous. As in the late 1950s and the early 1960s, Rockefeller money was increasingly moving out of the field of education to development, and Carnegie's contribution remained limited. Ford became the primary funder for area studies (Johnson and Tucker 1975, 8). From 1950 to 1973, the Ford Foundation gave \$278 million for area studies. The Ford Foundation also established in 1952 the Foreign Area Fellowship Program, which through 1972 awarded 2,050 fellowships (Pye 1975, 12).

What was the result of all these efforts: surveys, policy recommendations, governmental decisions, foundation support? It is very difficult to give precise numbers on university and college language and area studies programs since it is very hard to identify what is or what isn't a program. Programs also vary in style, size, and degree of integration. Nevertheless, it seems quite clear that "language and area studies, however defined, have been one of the most remarkable growth industries on American campuses" (Lambert 1973, 13). The numbers seen below make evident the development of area studies at a remarkably stunning pace.

Table 1. Number of Programs in American Universities and Colleges<sup>5</sup>

World Area	Hall 1946-47	Bennett 1951	Lambert 1970
Latin America	6	6	70
East Europe	3	5	58
Middle East	—	2	36
Africa	—	1	34
South Asia	1	1	26
Southeast Asia	—	2	15
East Asia	4	8	73
TOTAL	14	25	312

While these developments were taking place in the United States, on the other side of the Atlantic, parallel responses were generated against changing conditions. The British Foreign Office appointed a commission to analyze the state of studies on the non-Western world. The Interdepartmental Commission of Enquiry on Oriental, Slavonic, East European, and African Studies produced a report in 1947. The tone of this report is strikingly different from that of Hall's, its American counterpart in the same year. Although the commission's report began by underlining that the Second World War made clear the need for experts on non-Western countries, it continued with an appreciation of the existing Orientalist tradition in Britain. The commission called for "a proper balance," with a reduced emphasis on philology and an appreciation of the living present. In other words, what the commission deemed desirable were Orientalists "capable of understanding how the cultural heritage of a country influences [their] own contemporaries" (University Grants Committee 1947, 30-31). Although there was a call for an interdisciplinary approach, the disciplines that were invited to participate in this endeavor were *philosophy*, *history*, and *anthropology*, with the addition of economics.

More than a decade later, another report was written in Britain. But this one was very different from its predecessor. Indeed, this time it resembled those that were being produced in the United States. The Sub-Committee on

Oriental, Slavonic, East European, and African Studies in Britain was warning that “the overall pattern of development of Oriental and Slavonic studies [is] disappointing.” With the awareness of the ground lost by Europe to the United States, the so-called Hayter Report was very critical of the scant attention given to non-Western countries as “living societies” (University Grants Committee 1961, 3). There was overwhelming emphasis on the need to move regional studies away from the language departments: “It is in the history, geography, law, economics and *other social science departments* and faculties that the new developments should take place” (3; emphasis added). We can conclude from these reports that the battle between humanities and social sciences on the monopoly over the study of the non-West was a more difficult and persistent one.

#### CONCLUSION

Orientalism was a distinctively European enterprise. It emerged with the European capitalist expansion and reached its maturity at the point when Europe’s expansion was being consolidated with colonialism. It lost its ground with the loss of Europe’s hegemonic position. Area studies is a distinctively American enterprise. It emerged with the Second World War, which witnessed the United States’ ascent to a hegemonic position in the world-system; and it thrived during U.S. hegemony and started to lose its ground simultaneously with the withering away of American hegemony.

At the discursive level, the approach of Orientalism towards the non-West is almost directly inherited by area studies. Hence, knowledge about the non-West is perceived in a highly instrumental manner. The knowledge gathered under area studies served the purpose of monitoring and controlling the non-West. This knowledge is shaped by the ontological distinction drawn between “us” and “them,” and by the unequal power relations. However, contrary to Orientalism, which exclusively focused on the frozen past, area studies is an approach to the study of the contemporary non-Western world. Orientalism had a deductive approach: that is, the belief that sacred languages and religion would give the key to understanding the regions under scrutiny. Area studies has an inductive approach: that is, the belief that the individual contributions of sociologists, economists, political

scientists, historians, and anthropologists, when brought together, would enable the understanding of contemporary developments in a given country. While, for the former, the unit of analysis is whole regions defined by languages or religions, for the latter it is the nation-state, albeit framed by the idea of regions taken over from Orientalism. Both differences reflect the changing geopolitical conditions of the world-system. The regions of Orientalism overlapped with the boundaries of European colonies, and nation-states are treated as historically necessary units.

As Orientalism crossed the Atlantic, the study of the non-West changed its place under the academic roof and moved from the humanities to the social sciences. Thus, it was transformed from being Orientalism to “Orientalology.” Orientalism was taking its shape from colonialism and the direct administration of the colonies by European empires in the nineteenth century. Area studies is a response to the political ecology of a “decolonized,” Cold War world and the indirect domination of the United States over the non-Western world. Changing circumstances had made the knowledge collected under the Orientalist endeavor mostly redundant. Almost all of the reports prepared for various U.S. governmental departments and research agencies insistently reiterated that Orientalist knowledge was not suitable for the new role the United States was preparing to undertake in the world. In Pye’s words, “the explosive growth of American higher education in the 1950s and 1960s coincided with the discovery that *the classical European traditions and perspective could no longer describe the diverse richness of the real world*” (Pye 1975, 5; emphasis added).

As we have seen above, the reports on area studies, both in Britain and in America, are depicting something they phrase as the “real world,” “living societies.” They are arguing that this real world should be studied with social-scientific techniques, not with a humanities approach. The general perception was, in Gibbs’s words, that “we have to admit, with whatever misgivings, that the Orient is much too important to be left to the Orientalists” (Gibbs 1963, 12). And area studies was much too important to be studied in humanities departments. What was necessary was the “objective, pragmatic, issue-oriented, current-ridden” perspective of the nomothetic social sciences.

Thus, the struggle for opening up a space for area studies can also be viewed as a struggle between the social sciences and humanities in which the former seemed to have a definite victory until the 1970s. However, with the emergence of women's studies, ethnic studies and postcolonial studies, a new ground was opened for humanities to claim once again an academic share in the understanding of the contemporary world.

In conclusion, it would be necessary to note a very commonplace, yet nevertheless important point. Both Orientalism and area studies are products of the unequal power relations between the West and the non-West. There are no corresponding ways of studying "the other" developed in the non-West; there was never an Occidentalism or Occidentology.



#### N O T E S

1. In nineteenth-century historical understanding, "the period before the invention of writing was dismissed as 'prehistory'" (Burke 1994, 4). As we will see below, this leftover area was to be defined as the domain of anthropology.
2. It is interesting to note that neither various reports prepared for governmental use, nor most books and articles written in favor of the establishment of independent area studies in the 1950s and 1960s name Orientalism *per se*, but approach it obliquely—by saying either "former traditions of knowledge" or similar expressions in a manner to imply that area studies was conjured out of thin air. Hamilton Gibbs is an exception to this (1963). This may be said to be the result of an absence of a strong Orientalist tradition in the United States. But I would like to argue the opposite. It is because of a strong ambition to carve out a totally new space for area studies in the academic division of labor. In the larger picture, the struggle was between humanities and the social sciences. Area studies defenders wishing to place the not-yet-born discipline under the shelters of the nomothetic social sciences had to stand against a strong tradition of humanities. Thus, it is not the absence, but rather the very strong presence of Orientalism that was haunting for the ambitious initiators of area studies. As we will see, this latent struggle follows a more interesting course in Britain.
3. Oriental studies in America was triggered by the growth of missionary activities, which started to flourish early in the nineteenth century. Although the American Oriental Society was founded in 1842, and several universities started to offer courses on mainly

Semitic languages here and there in the first part of the nineteenth century (Dartmouth and Andover in 1807, Princeton in 1822, etc.), Oriental studies never occupied a significant place in American higher education, nor did they become a field of widely shared scholarly interest nor a political priority area until World War II.

4. The SSRC sponsored four other surveys in the same vein following Robert Hall's, which were: *Area Research and Training: A Conference Report* by Charles Wagley (1948); *Area Research: Theory and Practice* by Julian H. Steward (1950); *Area Studies in American Universities* by Wendel C. Bennet (1951); *Language and Area Studies Review* by Richard D. Lambert (1973).
5. This table is found in Lambert (1973), p. 15. ("Table 2.3. Number of Programs according to Bennet's Criteria"). Table reprinted with the permission of the American Academy of Political and Social Science.

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