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The strange death of area studies and the normative turn

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THE STRANGE DEATH OF AREA STUDIES AND THE NORMATIVE TURN

Areas Studies were set up in universities in the United States at the beginning of the Cold War. The end of the Cold War has entailed the downsizing of this form of academic organization, and the emergence of Global Studies in its place. In a parallel fashion, the 1980s witnessed the rise of Audit Culture in European university systems. These two quite distinct processes have favoured what could tentatively be called a «Normative Turn» in the social sciences, i.e. a switch to an approach which was much more normatively oriented than was the case during the Cold War.

Keywords: Global history, NGO, Normative turn, Area studies.

Area Studies during the Cold War

In the beginning, there were Area Studies. Or, more generally, there was the first phase of the massive expansion of higher education in the USA during the post-war era (also known as the Cold War). The development of Area Studies was a distinct phenomenon but it was always part of a much wider set of processes, many of them interrelated.

The GI Bill enabled former GIs (e.g., Clifford Geertz) to go to a college of their choice¹; ultimately it allowed them to be positioned for the subsequent expansion of US higher education in the 1960s². This was the context in which Area Studies emerged. It consisted in the creation of research infrastructure in the US for the study of major macro-regions of the world (all of which, at that point, were of some interest to the US as a global power). It established a systematic approach to the study of these areas, which had an obvious relevance for the development of foreign policy. In this sense, it was an instrument of the Cold War, as many critics have argued.

Benedict Anderson has pointed out that the specific American approach to Area Studies reflected the absence in the US of colonial archives, research and teaching centres equivalent to those established in the major European colonial empires (e.g., the School of Oriental

and African Studies, the Institut National de Langues et Civilisations Orientales)³. The history of the development of Area Studies has been extensively studied and analysed by many authors, both in the context of cultural Cold War Studies and in the context of regional overviews of research⁴.

The starting point was in the middle of the Second World War: «In 1943, the Committee on World Regions of the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) (the coordinating council of the seven major U.S. social science national associations) wrote an internal report entitled “World regions in the Social Sciences”»⁵. Unsurprisingly, after the end of the War (and the beginning of the Cold War) Area Studies «rapidly became accepted as a major innovation in the leading U.S. universities». By 1950, the SSRC was concerned about the fact that «the job is so big and time is short. Only a great Federal program can do it. The problem is to find on what terms Federal aid is possible without Federal control»⁶. A further step in the development the programmes took place in the wake of the effect of the Soviet launch of Sputnik in 1957, which led to the rapid approval of the National Defence Education Act (NDEA) in 1958: «Under Title VI of NDEA, aid was given to area studies centres throughout the United States for more than twenty years». The 1950s and 1960s were the Golden Age of Area Studies. But «by 1974, a sceptical Congress, faced with further appropriation requests, was already wondering about “oversupply”. It required the intervention of “academics close to Nixon (viz., Daniel Moynihan and Henry Kissinger)” to save Title VI»⁷.

The Vietnam War and its political aftermath brought out the downside of Area Studies, through its connection to US foreign and defence policies. But Immanuel Wallerstein was willing to point out the unintended effects, with reference to the emergence of new forms of studies (critical of US policies):

The creation of area studies laid the groundwork for their emergence, first of all by undermining the plausibility of traditional ethnography and oriental studies, then by forcing the «Western» disciplines to take into account a larger range of data, and finally by questioning the sacrosanct divisions of the disciplines⁸.

It is essential to remember that Area Studies were funded primarily by the major philanthropic foundations: Ford, Rockefeller and Carnegie (the Ford Foundation proved to be the biggest promoter). This reflected, first and foremost, the need to bypass Congress, which might easily have raised objections to the diversion of public money to the

study of faraway countries of little interest to the average US voter in Ohio and elsewhere. In fact, the NDEA «for the first time provided large-scale funding for colleges and universities»⁹.

On the operative side, it is also important to remember the role played by key players in the creation of the interconnection of US government policy, newly-established International Organizations, the major foundations and Area Studies. A classic case is that of Paul G. Hoffman (1891-1974): administrator of the Marshall Plan, 1948-50; president of the Ford Foundation, 1951-53, administrator of the UNDP, 1966-72¹⁰. In short, Area Studies represented a key aspect of both US academic structures and of its international politics.

Area Studies after the Cold War

The end of the Cold War affected many aspects in the US educational system, and unsurprisingly it also affected (very quickly) Area Studies. The major foundations drastically reduced funding for Area Studies, to the benefit of Global Studies. The highly competitive and market-oriented US academic system has a speed of change which makes changes in the European academic system appear geological in comparison. Departments were rapidly closed or restructured, specialist libraries were put up for sale¹¹.

Bruce Cumings has analysed the implications of the partial dismantling of these programmes after the end of the Cold War¹²:

At first Congress cut all its funds, but then restored some of them – or so it seemed... If government funding for area studies seems to be drying up, so is funding from the foundations... In the mid-1990s major funding organizations like the Mellon Foundation and the Ford Foundation have also made clear their declining support for area studies and their desire for cross-regional scholarship, so that in subtly coercive context a new beginning for the SSRC becomes obligatory¹³.

Huber, Ruble and Stavrakis have actually argued that the new SSRC framework «will tear international scholarship from the rich, textured empirical base that has been assiduously developed through decades of research, moving it ahead instead to a nebulous “global” framework for research»¹⁴. Cumings shared these concerns. With reference to the changes which took place in the 1990s, he argued that «it not a matter of SSRC raising a challenge to the global corporation, which is hardly to be expected, but it is a matter of not abandoning hard-won scholarly

knowledge and resources that we already have». He then added in his conclusions:

As postwar history unfolded... scholars caught up in one historical system and one discourse that defined discipline, department, area studies, suddenly found themselves in another field of inquiry, well in advance of imagining or discovering the subject themselves. To put a subtle relationship all too crudely, power and money had found their subject first, and shaped fields of inquiry accordingly¹⁵.

The cuts in funding for Area Studies meant less funds for students (who would have needed to learn a foreign language), which would lead to a reduction in enrolments, which would lead to a reduction in staff, which would make Area Studies less viable. This partial demise of Area Studies has led to a wide-ranging discussion of the past, present and future of the field¹⁶. There have also been discussions on specific regions¹⁷.

There have also been more specific discussions on the effects of boundary shifts between disciplines. David Nugent has argued that

the [major US] foundations began «transforming area studies» by directing research away from area and towards the changing configuration of global and regional space under late capitalism. In the process, the foundations began to focus the attention of scholars on a series of de-territorialized problems: globalization, democracy, development, human rights, and sustainability¹⁸.

Furthermore, Charles King has argued that the relationship between the US Department of Defense and academic research in the social sciences has led to a «growing militarization of government-funded scholarship», as illustrated by the Department's Minerva Initiative, which

provides support for «research on areas of strategic importance to US national security policy» and for «projects addressing specific topic areas determined by the Secretary of Defense» as the call for application says. In the current three-year cycle, which runs until 2017, the program expects to disburse \$17 million to university-based researchers in the social sciences. Millions more have been allocated since the first round began in 2009¹⁹.

The effects of the demise of Areas Studies in Europe were not uniform. The British academic system was, unsurprisingly, among the most receptive of this re-orientation. US influence on the British academic context was much more pervasive than it had been in the past: «by the

1980s, there was probably no other country where influences from both sides of the Atlantic intermingled so freely». This was also followed by «a major exit [of British academics] to the United States»²⁰. Area Studies-type structures (which had never been formalised to the same extent as had been the case in the US) did not disappear, but declined in terms of their overall presence in the British academic system.

The French case has been, so far, quite different. The presence of a much stronger statist tradition in academic structures, ensured (and still ensures) the survival of the *aires culturelles*, the French version of Area Studies. The future of these *aires* has been at the centre of a vigorous debate²¹.

Germany was affected in a different way. On the one hand, the German academic system has so far preserved a more traditional disciplinary structure, coupled with relatively adequate funding provided by regional governments. On the other hand, the bottleneck in the German academic structure forces many young academics to produce publications which are marketable also (if not mainly) on the US academic market. Changes in the requirements of the German doctoral system may also have played a role²².

In theory the decline in funding for US Area Studies should not have affected directly the European (EU and non-EU countries), not least because of the absence of a formal equivalent of Area Studies in Europe. In practice the realities of the increasingly «globalised» academic market ensured that these changes in the US would have an impact on European academic practice. The increasing speed in the diffusion of a «Global Studies» academic paradigm is an illustration of this impact. The same applies to the renewed interest in «(trans)Atlantic history», and «transnational history».

None of this means that all these trends derived from the same factors. On the contrary, they are the result of a series of quite distinct intellectual, cultural and generational factors. But once they appeared, their convergence strongly conditioned the setting of the social sciences of the following two decades. Debates on these themes have generally lacked a structured approach to the implications of the demise of Area Studies for the social sciences as a whole, and for historical sciences in particular.

NGOs, New Public Management and Audit Culture

Many overviews of the political and social history of the US and of Western Europe follow the predictable labels of Thatcherism, Reagan-

ism, culminating in the emergence of a «Washington Consensus», and of an assumed «neo-liberal» hegemony. This process of labelling has not, in fact, provided much analysis of what actually happened on the ground. A reaction against the use of such labelling is now underway²³.

The emergence of international NGOs (Non-Governmental Organisations) is a case in point. The factors leading to the growth of NGOs varied considerably²⁴. What was in fact unique was the convergence of this trend with the emerging «Washington Consensus», starting in the 1980s. As Alex De Waal has pointed out

The expansion of international humanitarianism in the 1980s and 1990s reflects a retreat from accountability, akin to the dominance of neo-liberalism... This is no coincidence: the internationalization of social welfare is closely linked to the decline of state authority which is central to the neo-liberal project²⁵.

Whatever the reciprocal feelings of NGOs and «neo-liberals» may have been, there was a marriage of convenience between these two forces, leading to the massive growth of NGOs from the 1980s onward, and even more after the end of the Cold War.

Academia was soon affected by this trend. The gradual but constant adoption of («neo-liberal») New Public Management systems in the public sector in Western Europe (from the end of the 1980s onwards) was bound to have an effect on academic institutions and their practices. The British academic system was among the first to adopt these changes, which amounted to the introduction of an extensive audit system in teaching and research²⁶. Other Western European countries tried (and still try) to follow the British example, but Britain remains an exceptional case, not just because of the effects of Thatcherism, but also because of its position in the international student market: a provincial university in Britain (not to mention Oxbridge and the LSE) has a power of attraction on the non-European student market which cannot really be matched by any university in continental Europe²⁷. Finally, the entire Bologna Process clearly takes some (idealised) version of the British University system as its template; in so doing, it gives British Universities a clear advantage.

On top of these changes, the sheer increase in the volume of research funding from international organisations (e.g., the EU, the Wellcome Trust, the Open Society network, and many other entities) drastically modified the terms of trade (or the bargaining power) of the academic system as a whole (at least in Europe, if not in the US). Research Assessments, Impact Factors: a new vocabulary has come into existence, and

established itself as a bureaucratic *lingua franca*. Academics in Europe tend to be highly critical of these changes. There is no shortage of discussions on these topics²⁸.

Innumerable cases can illustrate how the changes in academic structures affect research in the social sciences generally, and historical research in particular. As Michael Pinto-Duschinsky has pointed out:

The subject of the financing of election campaigns... has rightly been the subject of a large academic literature as well as frequent press comment... analysis of fund-raising in the university [and the effects of these funds] and in similar fields is a lonely, pioneering effort²⁹.

Pinto-Duschinsky has pointed out the possible side-effects of «outside funding» on research on German companies and banks in the National Socialist period³⁰.

Another relevant case is the use of historians as advisers in Tribunals connected with political events. There was the case of the Bloody Sunday Tribunal (relating to the events in Londonderry on 30 January 1972)³¹. One of the historical advisers concluded his reflections on his experience by pointing out that

The [UK] government has a legacy from the Bloody Sunday Tribunal – not just the heavy financial cost – but also the claims of other victims of the «Troubles» to have their stories respected by the state. It has unfinished business here, and it needs to reflect on the way it has gone about its work thus far. A certain humility is necessary³².

The Srebrenica massacre in Bosnia-Herzegovina in July 1995 was the focus of an investigation commissioned by the government of the Netherlands, involving historians and social scientists, which proved highly controversial³³.

The point is not to discuss or to question the scholarly accuracy of these cases of «applied» historical research (and many other similar cases). It is, rather, to point out that this kind of research (externally commissioned, and therefore funded by external sources) raises issues related not only to academic and research ethics, but also to the actual content of research.

Two additional factors affect current research trends. The first is the rapidly increasing role of European Union funding for research. Because of the political (pan-European) nature of the funding, the conditionalities involved are much greater than those involved in World Bank projects, and they impose a quite rigid format on research. This

produces a bias in favour of researchers operating in the core countries of the EU³⁴.

The second factor is the marked deterioration of the «terms of trade» for academic institutions in Eastern Europe. During the Cold War, Eastern European institutions had many problems and limitations, but they also had significant bargaining power in dealing with Western European and US institutions: after all, they were counterparts (who could expect a degree of reciprocity in providing favours). After the end of the Cold War, Eastern European academic structures were significantly weakened by the national governments, if not totally dismantled (as happened in the weakest countries). This has meant that the academic agendas of the core countries of the EU have achieved an almost unchallenged dominance over Eastern European institutions³⁵. There is one exception which confirms the rule: the Russian Federation, which, having much greater resources at its disposal, in recent years has managed to carry out a selective policy of recruiting or retaining high-level national academics in the social sciences, including historians.

A Normative Turn?

The diverse factors affecting the prevailing trends in the social sciences may be occasionally related, but they were basically quite independent: there was no neo-liberal «master plan». However, the convergence of these factors produced a quite coherent set of results.

In the historical sciences, one of the results has been what may be termed a «normative» turn³⁶. The term «normative» is used in this paper in a very loose sense, and it could be substituted by the term «prescriptive». The key aspect of this hypothetical «turn» is the relationship with *advocacy*. As Kenneth Prewitt pointed out in 2002,

in the latter part of the 19th century [in the US], from and the social sciences emerged from and retained a close alliance with social reform movements... [But] gradually... leaders in the social sciences came to believe that sharp differences over social and economic policy within the social sciences would compromise their influence. What happened then was the disavowal of an explicit reform agenda and claim, instead, to scientific neutrality and objectivity, which is important to the way in which the social sciences interact with the state to this day. That is, the credibility as a science replaced the advocacy of reformers as the basis from which to assert social influence... In objectivity would be found credibility; credibility would establish legitimacy; and legitimacy would then become a new basis for the application of

knowledge to social purposes and political goals... Social scientists will stand outside of advocacy, but with the hope that their new knowledge will be used by those whose business is advocacy³⁷.

Prewitt was addressing the predicament of the «policy sciences», and he appeared inclined to support going back to «advocacy» for these sciences. But «policy-oriented» research reflects a quite explicit choice in term of the destination of the final product: a policy paper is destined for use in the political public sphere. There is no ambiguity in this context; there is a straightforward relationship between the client (who pays for the research) and the provider of services.

The production of normative research in the non-policy social sciences (and especially in history) is a quite different matter. In this case the client is an opaque institution (e.g., the European Union, a local authority, a bank, a foundation) which can decide to provide incentives for research which, in a no less opaque way, is oriented towards a given objective, which is normatively defined (e.g., advocacy of the development of «civil society»).

The issue here is not the appropriateness of the objective («civil society» might be commendable, after all) but, rather, the nature of the contractual relationship between the client and the provider of services. This fact, in turn, conditions the way in which social science issues are framed. It conditions not only the form of the final product (as it is legitimately entitled to) but also its content.

For example, «Human Rights» is a classic case of what may be termed a «normative» topic³⁸. There was no shortage of discussion on topics of this kind during the Cold War, but the international context (coupled with the existence of a basically «statist» academic system in Western Europe) at least tried to maintain an appearance of «objectivity». It can be argued that these approaches were just (to use Peter Novick's phrase) a «noble dream»³⁹. But «normative» research (or advocacy-oriented research) offers, instead of a framework, a straight-jacket.

Why did academia follow so swiftly this «normative» turn? There is no need to suggest any conspiracy («neo-liberal», or otherwise), let alone some *trahison des clercs*. The turn reflected, quite simply, the adaptation to the administrative imperative of «Impact», which is a key element of Audit Culture⁴⁰. In the historical sciences, what better justification (in terms of «impact» or relevance) could there be than a *normative* kind of topic? Once a topic or a research finding has been sufficiently turned (or bent) into a normative outcome, the hurdle represented by «impact» can be easily overcome. Medieval guilds can be

shown to be relevant for an understanding of contemporary «civil society». This may well be the case, but it represents, both in form and in content, a marked «turn» in the historical sciences.

Conclusions

The point of this paper is not to argue that there has been some sinister convergence between the demise of Area Studies, the rise of Global Studies, Neo-liberalism, NGOs and the rise of Audit Culture in European universities. It should be obvious that these processes all reflected quite different causes and different time-frames, and that their simultaneous appearance was by no means preordained. But once such a convergence of (always distinct) processes did occur, it continued to have profound consequences, which have been addressed rarely, if at all. It has profoundly modified (if not distorted) the nature of regionally-based studies («Area Studies», as they used to be called). It has led to the rapid growth of globally oriented studies (without necessarily ensuring the existence of an adequate research infrastructure for such studies). It has produced a «transnational» label, which cannot always be distinguished easily from long-established practices of historical research. It has reflected the consolidation of an Audit Culture, in conjunction with an NGO-related culture (which mixes elements taken from the practices of voluntary organizations together with some version of neo-liberalism). Once established, these connections are destined to prove long-lasting, profoundly affecting the nature of research in the social sciences as a whole, including historical research. This conjuncture needs to be addressed, analysed and understood. It should not be simply accepted as the result of the *Zeitgeist*.

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Note al testo

¹ Geertz served for two years in the US Navy (1943-45), and went to Antioch College thanks to the G.I. Bill. See C. GEERTZ, *A Life of Learning. Charles Homer Haskings Lecture 1999*, New York 1999, reprinted in ID., *Available Light: Anthropological Reflections on Philosophical Topics*, Princeton 2000, pp. 3-20; F. INGLIS, *Clifford Geertz: culture, custom and ethics*, Cambridge 2000, pp. 3-5.

² For the general phenomenon of the GI Bill, see S. METTLER, *Soldiers to citizens: the G.I. Bill and the making of the greatest generation*, Oxford 2005.

³ B. ANDERSON, *The Spectre of Comparisons*, London 1999, pp. 8-12 (with special reference to Southeast Asian Studies).

⁴ For an overview and critical discussion of the prehistory and history of Areas Studies, see D. NUGENT, *Knowledge and Empire: The Social Sciences and United States Imperial Expansion*, in «Identities», 17 (2010), pp. 2-44. For overviews of two specific research areas, see for Sovietology, D.C. ENGERMAN, *Know Your Enemy. The rise and Fall of America's Soviet Experts*, Oxford 2009; and for Middle Eastern Studies, Z. LOCKMAN, *Contending Visions of the Middle East. The History and Politics of Orientalism*, Cambridge 2004.

⁵ I. WALLERSTEIN, *The Unintended Consequences of Cold War Area Studies*, in N. CHOMSKY *et al.*, *The Cold War & the University*, New York 1997, p. 195.

⁶ R. J. HEINDEL, *World Regions in the Social Sciences. Report of a Committee of the Social Science Research Council*, New York 1950, pp. 1-2, as quoted in WALLERSTEIN, *Unintended Consequences* cit., p. 206.

⁷ Ivi, pp. 208-9. For a concise overview of these topics, see C. KING, *The Decline of International Studies*, in «Foreign Affairs», 94/4 (2015), pp. 88-98.

⁸ WALLERSTEIN, *Unintended Consequences* cit., p. 228. It should be noted that not all authors share this view. Masao Miyoshi and Harry D. Harootunian have contended that «area studies, despite its claim to be multidisciplinary, actually ended up supporting the retention of disciplinary barriers, as it still does in the major area studies centres» (M. MIYOSHI, D. HAROOTUNIAN, *The «Afterlife» of Area Studies*, in EID. [eds], *Learning Places: The Afterlives of Area Studies*, Durham (N.C.) 2002, p. 7). It can be argued, however, that this evaluation reflects simply a difference of emphasis, in contrast to Wallerstein's perspective.

⁹ LOCKMAN, *Contending Visions* cit., p. 125 (italics added),

¹⁰ For the beginnings of the Ford Foundation, see F.X. SUTTON, *The Ford Foundation: the Early Years*, in «Daedalus», 116/1 (1987), pp. 41-91; and V.R. BERGHAN, *America and the Intellectual Cold Wars in Europe. Shepard Stone between Philanthropy, Academy, and Diplomacy*, Princeton 2001, chs. 6-7. For more general studies on the role of US Foundations, see E. BERMAN, *The Influence of the Carnegie, Ford and Rockefeller Foundations on American Foreign Policy*, New York 1983, ch. 4, pp. 99 ff.; E.C. LAGEMANN, *The Politics of Knowledge. The Carnegie Corporation, Philanthropy, and Public Policy*, Westport (CT) 1989. For the general context of these international institutions, see M. MAZOWER, *Governing the World. The History of an Idea*, London 2012, pp. 273-304.

¹¹ This shift may also be detected in the priorities in post-Cold war US intelligence. As specialists of the field have pointed out, over the past two decades US intelligence agencies have drastically reduced specialist staff (who usually came from an academic training) specializing not only on Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union, but also on many other regions of the world. The use of electronic forms of surveillance was apparently considered an adequate substitute. For a preliminary discussion of these aspects, see A. G. THOCHARIS *et al.*, *The Central Intelligence Agency: Security Under Scrutiny*, Hamden (CT) 2005; J. MURPHY, *Wrong Estimates*, in «Times Literary Supplement», 7 June 2006.

¹² B. CUMINGS, *Boundary Displacement: Area Studies and International Studies During and After the Cold War*, in C. SIMPSON (ed.), *Universities and Empire. Money and Politics in the Social Sciences During the Cold War*, New York 1998, pp. 159-88.

¹³ Ivi, pp. 177-8.

¹⁴ R.T. HUBER, B.A. RUBLE, P.A. STAVRAKIS, *Post-Cold War «International Scholarship»: A Brave New World or the Triumph of Form over Substance*, in «SSRC Items», March-April 1995, as quoted in CUMINGS, *Boundary Displacement* cit., p. 179.

¹⁵ Ivi, pp. 180-2.

¹⁶ For a general overview of current debates on the future of Area Studies, see MIYOSHI, HAROOTUNIAN, *The «Afterlife» of Area Studies* cit., 1-18; D. SZANTON (ed.) *The Politics of Knowledge. Area Studies and the Disciplines*, Berkeley 2004; W. SCHÄFER, *Reconfiguring Area Studies for the Golden Age*, in «Globalities Journal», 22 (31 December 2010), pp. 1-18; AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES, COMMISSION ON THE HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES, *The Heart of the Matter. The Humanities and Social Sciences for a vibrant, competitive and secure nation*, Cambridge (Mass.) 2013. For a sharply focussed discussion, see KING, *The Decline of International Studies* cit.

¹⁷ See, e.g., the case of Japanese Studies, discussed by C. JOHNSON, E.B. KEEHN, *A Disaster in the Making: Rational Choice and Asian Studies*, in «The National Interest», 36 (summer 1994), pp. 14-22. Discussions concerning Middle Eastern Studies, especially after 9/11 2001, have a more directly political tinge. See, e.g., LOCKMAN, *Contending Visions* cit.; and M. KRAMER, *Ivory Towers on Sand. The Failure of Middle Eastern Studies in America*, Washington D.C. 2001. For the case of Eastern European Studies, see S. E. HANSON, *In Defense of Regional Studies in a Globalized World: Slavic, East European and Eurasian Studies Twenty-Five Years after the Fall of the Berlin Wall*, in «Newsnet. News of the Association for Slavic, Eastern European and Eurasian Studies», 55/1 (2015), pp. 1-5.

¹⁸ NUGENT, *Knowledge and Empire* cit., p. 26.

¹⁹ KING, *The Decline of International Studies* cit.

²⁰ P. ANDERSON, *A Culture in Contraflow* (1990), in ID., *English Questions*, London 1992, pp. 201, 203.

²¹ É. LONGUENESSE, F. SINO, *Aires culturelles et pluridisciplinarité: quel enjeu pour les sciences sociales?*, in «Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée», 105-106 (Janvier 2005); J.-F. SABOURET, *Pré-rapport sur la place des « aires culturelles » au CNRS, le 15 mars 2010*, Paris 2010.

²² For a comprehensive overview of the state of German research structures on Eastern Europe, see S. PETRUNGARO, *La ricerca sull'Europa orientale in Germania*, in «Passato e presente», 33/95 (2015), pp. 101-20.

²³ S. VENKATESAN (ed.), *Debate: «The concept of neoliberalism has become an obstacle to the anthropological understanding of the twenty-first century»*, in «Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute», n.s. 21 (2015), pp. 911-23.

²⁴ E.A.L. Turner has argued that demographic factors can explain the rise in NGOs. See E.A.L. TURNER, *Why Has the Number of International Non-Governmental Organizations Exploded since 1960?*, in «Cliodynamics», 1/1 (2010), pp. 81-91.

²⁵ A. DE WAAL, *Famine Crimes: Politics and the Disaster Relief Industry in Africa*, Oxford-London 1997, p. 66.

²⁶ S. COLLINI, *What are Universities for?*, London 2012; M. STRATHERN (ed.), *Audit Cultures. Anthropological studies in accountability, ethics and the academy*, London 2000.

²⁷ The academic system of the Netherlands may represent an exception to this general rule, at least in certain fields of research.

²⁸ A useful introduction to these topics may be found in COLLINI, *What are Universities For?* cit.

²⁹ M. PINTO-DUSCHINSKY, *Fund-raising and the Holocaust: the case of Dr Gert-Rudolf Flick's Contribution to Oxford University*, in A. MONTEFIORE, D. VINE (eds) *Integrity in the Public and Private Domains*, London 1999, p. 235, as quoted in J. PETRIE, *The Holocaust Museum in D.C.; money, scholarship and criticism; the writing of history*, available in «H-Holocaust»/«H-Net» (posted on 19 August 2001).

³⁰ M. PINTO-DUSCHINSKY, *Selling the Past: the dangers of outside finance for historical research*, in «Times Literary Supplement», 23 October 1998; and the subsequent responses in the same journal (by A. BARKAI *et al.* and by H. MOMMSEN) in the *Letters* section (6 November 1998; 27 November 1998; with the reply by PINTO-DUSCHINSKY, 18 December 1998); M.

PINTO-DUSCHINSKY, *The Holocaust: Excusing the Inexcusable*, in «Standpoint», July/August 2011. In his 1998 article Pinto-Duschinsky also refers to cases connected with academic funding derived from the EU Jean Monnet Programme and Middle Eastern states.

³¹ P. BEW, *The role of the historical adviser and the Bloody Sunday Tribunal*, in «Historical Research», 78/199 (2005), pp. 113-127; ID., *Historical Background to Bloody Sunday. Report to the Bloody Sunday Tribunal (January 2000)*, now in *Report of the Bloody Sunday Inquiry*, London 2010, vol. I, ch. 6.

³² ID., *The role of the historical adviser* cit., p. 127.

³³ J.C.H. BLOM *et al.*, *Srebrenica, a «safe» area. Reconstruction, background, consequences and analysis of the fall of a Safe Area*, Amsterdam 2002; I. DEPLA, X. BOUGAREL, J.L. FOURNEL, *Srebrenica 1995: Analyses Croisées des Enquêtes et des rapports*, in «Cultures et Conflits», 65 (printemps 2007); EID., *Investigating Srebrenica. Institutions, Facts, Responsibilities*, Oxford 2012. For a description of the controversies relating to the NIOD report, see G. DUIJZINGS, *The road to hell is paved with good intentions. The Srebrenica report of the Netherlands Institute for War Documentation (NIOD)*, in «South-East Europe Newsletter», 54 (2003), pp.1-7.

³⁴ ANONYMOUS ACADEMIC, *European research funding: It's like Robin Hood in reverse*, in «Guardian», 8 November 2014.

³⁵ For a relevant discussion of the position of social scientists operating in the semi-periphery, see M. BLAGOJEVIĆ, G. YAIR, *The Catch-22 syndrome of social scientists in the semiperiphery: Exploratory sociological observations*, in «Sociologija», 52 (2010), pp. 337-58. For a recent discussion on «the low academic status of East Europeanists at large, and the marginal status of East Europeans within the East Europeanist academic periphery», see the recent discussion promoted by Béla Greskovits in the «Why We Study Eastern Europe?» on-line group (18 October 2015).

³⁶ For a broad discussion of historical «turns», see the AHR Forum, *Historiographic «Turns» in Critical Perspective*, in «American Historical Review», 117 (2012), pp. 698-813. It should be pointed out that there have been discussions concerning «Normative Turns» in specific disciplines in the social sciences; see, e.g., J. GERRING, *A Normative Turn in Political Science?*, in «Polity», 38 (2006), pp. 101-33; R. BELLAMY, D. CASTIGLIONE, *The Normative Turn in European Union Studies*, «Russel Working Paper», no. 38, Department of Politics, University of Exeter, July 2000. These cases use the term «Normative Turn» in a more specific sense, related to Political Science as such.

³⁷ K. PREWITT, *The Social Science Project: Then, Now and Next*, in «Items and issues», 3/1-2 (2002), pp. 5-9, p. 7.

³⁸ See, e.g., S. MOYN, *The Last Utopia. Human Rights in History*, Cambridge (Mass.) 2012.

³⁹ P. NOVICK, *The Noble Dream. The «Objectivity Question» and the American Historical Profession*, Cambridge 1988.

⁴⁰ For a discussion of the category of «Impact», see COLLINI, *What are Universities For?* cit., pp. 168-77.

