Some fifteen years ago, I imagined the Global Age in the plural guided by the “Middle Ages” as a sequence of eras:

My colleagues five hundred years from now will call the long and eventful stretch of history since the Second World War the Global Ages. Future historians will use the plural to signify that they see a sequence of eras in this new historical epoch, which was originally named the Global Age (Schäfer 1995).

This was not an outlandish thought in 1995. The following year, Martin Albrow published *The Global Age* – in the early 1990s, the dialectic of beginning and end was widely felt. Of course, it was a stretch to assume that historical periodization will eventually introduce the anticipated Global Ages. However, a few things had become clear. The Cold War had already turned into a distinct sub-era known from start to finish: from the U.S. “containment” (Truman Doctrine) of the Soviet Union with substantial aid for Greece and Turkey in 1947 to the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the demise of the S.U. in 1991. Dead certainties like the two Germanys were no longer and other ostensibly well-established entities, such as area studies, were forced to reconsider their justification. Area studies had become an asset in search of a problem, an answer that was in large part invented for the bipolar *problématique* of the Cold War and not the unfettered globalizations and multipolar tensions that became dominant after the Cold War had ended. The particular problem, for which area studies had been the main academic solution, had disappeared. The world had changed and area studies had to adjust. This is a study in the maladjustment of area studies.

---

Abstract: Area studies developed in the crucible of the Cold War. Yet when globalization became the context of contemporary history, area studies responded inadequately to the challenge. Unlike world history, which transformed into global history, area studies did not adapt sufficiently to the new global environment of weakened and deconstructed geopolitical and academic borders. Vital supporters like the Ford Foundation failed to reconfigure area studies for the Global Age. Hence, this essay argues for a strategic defragmentation of area studies into comparative studies of global problems in local contexts and vice versa (global/local studies). Following the proposition that area studies without global studies are blind and global studies without area studies are empty, the article identifies and reviews the contributions since Open the Social Sciences (Wallerstein et al. 1996) that can leverage the field’s progressive interdisciplinary structure and lead it toward the advanced transdisciplinary enterprise of global/local studies.

Keywords: civilization and/or culture, Cold War, Ford Foundation, horizontal historiography (Fletcher & Frank), macrohistory (global history and/or world history), multiple modernities (Eisenstadt), translational theory (Chakrabarty)
boundary-conscious as regular university disciplines. It is an unintended consequence of this success that area studies are now increasingly at odds with the border-and-boundary-busting dynamics of the post-Cold War era of the Global Age. Hence, a newly responsive, boundary-defying area studies approach is required to tackle the challenges of global history. To be successful and relevant in our time, the rich local expertise of area studies must be combined with transdisciplinarity and cooperation among the experts of different world regions. Yet that combination is currently precluded by the fragmented organization of traditional area studies.

Assuming that the challenge of global history warrants the defragmentation of area studies, we have to address the question, how does one defragment area studies safely? This is a delicate question in times of economic crisis and budgetary cuts when whole university departments, not to mention programs, centers, or institutes, are endangered in the name of reform. So let me be clear: Globally connected societies cannot afford to lose the accumulated regional knowledge, cultural Fingerspitzengefühl, and linguistic competence of area studies. Retrenching area studies would be pennywise and shortsighted; it would save a relatively small amount of money and destroy a lot of hard-won value. Universities and colleges are expected to help solve the world’s complex global/local problems, not to make them harder to tackle. Of course, real-world problems can be intractable and defy academic solutions. But throwing the stores of regional knowledge overboard, which traditional area studies contain, can only reduce our ability to understand the local problems of global history, let alone cope with them. Thus, I argue that the optimal way to defragment area studies is to evolve them into global/local studies. The evolution of area studies into global/local studies is a vital matter for area studies as well as global studies. Paraphrasing a famous dictum about philosophy and history of science,

Schafer, GSJ (31 December 2010), page 2

The maps I have in mind contain four entities: global history (GH), area studies (AS), global studies (GS), and world history (WH).

Unconnected, these entities form an unordered list, but connected, they can map the challenge of area studies. The first map I would like to chart links world history, global history, and area studies. It displays the relationship between world and global history, resolves the double meaning of the term “history,” and connects the force field of history to area studies.

Map 1: Questioning "History" (click map to expand)

The quasi-natural force of global history challenges area studies. Area studies, in turn, are challenged as an academic field, incorporated in university institutes, centers, programs, and departments. The appearance of world history on this map reminds us that global and world history are academic pursuits, too, and as such categorically related. Finally, we can also see that “history” is an ambiguous term. It can refer to the books and articles historians write, and then it means history is what historians do. However, if the term is used to denote what those books and articles are about – the subject matter of historical literature – the attention shifts from artifact to fact and then history means, basically, that the Roman Empire actually fell and historical processes like globalization are somehow out there in the world for real. Thus, the challenge arrow in Map 1 goes from global history as a force in the real world to area studies as a special collection of disciplines in the academy. Today, the force field of history is associated with the power of globalization. Sixty years ago, the Cold War provided history with fearsome power and drama.
Map 2: Two Force Fields of History

6 World history demands the development of area studies. I have made this line up to summarize the sentiment in the United States after the Berlin Blockade of 1948/49 and the onset of the Korean War in 1950. The lack of global literacy became an issue of national concern in the harsh light of the incipient nuclear arms race and worldwide tensions between the U.S. and the Soviet Union.

From the beginning of the Twentieth Century through the Second World War, internationally-oriented teaching and research in US colleges and universities rarely went beyond European History and Literature, Classics, and Comparative Religion. Up to 1940, US universities had produced no more than 60 Ph.Ds on the contemporary non-western world and most dealt with antiquity (Szanton 2004, 5 f.).

7 The critics put area studies on the academic agenda in the late 1940s and called for quick and decisive action. Major research universities and funding agencies stepped up to the plate, most effectively the Ford Foundation. From 1951 to 1972, its Foreign Area Fellowship Program (FAFP) supported “training and research in nearly every corner of the accessible world of some 2,050 doctoral students in the social sciences and humanities” (11). After 1972, the Ford Foundation continued its massive area studies support via the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) and the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS), who now administered the FAFP jointly. Between 1951 and 1966, the Ford Foundation “invested more than $270 million in Area Studies training, research, and related programs” (ibid.). Virtually all other private foundations followed suit including major players such as the Rockefeller Foundation, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, and the MacArthur Foundation. In 1961, the Fulbright Program for “Mutual Education and Cultural Exchange” was greatly expanded. The National Science Foundation and the National Endowment for the Humanities created competitions for international research projects and conferences – in short, area studies were funded and established fast and furious. To this date, no other applied “studies” program – science studies, women’s studies, environmental studies – has been able to replicate this Cold War story of successful academic innovation.

8 The term of choice for macrohistory until 1989 was world history. Global history emerged successfully after the Cold War had ended. The turn from world to global history is important for at least two reasons: first, it involved a paradigm shift in the 1990s; second, it highlights that area studies have not seen a similar paradigmatic transformation. Yet before looking more closely at the paradigm shift from world to global history, let me brief you about traditional world history as practiced by its leading early and mid-twentieth century lights: Oswald Spengler, Arnold Toynbee, and William McNeill.

Map 3: Leading World Historians (click map to expand)
Spengler became instantly famous in Germany in 1918 with the first volume of *Decline of the West* (1915), which predicted the looming downfall of the Faustian Western civilization as a world-historical inevitability. Undercutting the Allied victory in World War I with a comparative morphology of eight "high cultures," Spengler's world history propelled all civilizations across a millennial life cycle arcing from birth to death through the seasons of spring, summer, fall, and civilizational winter.[3]

Spengler’s work inspired Toynbee’s *A Study of History* (1987). Enlarging the number of civilizational units from eight to 21, and replacing Spengler’s growth-to-decay cadence with the empirically more open mechanism of “challenge and response,” Toynbee nevertheless found similar “rhythms” in his sample of world civilizations. After two world wars, he too struggled with the ultimate fate of the “post-Modern” (Toynbee) Latin-Christian Western civilization. To Toynbee, Western civilization had been breaking down since the religious wars of the sixteenth century. Yet, doom was not certain. Toynbee believed that God could always make a difference and rescue the West.

McNeill’s *The Rise of the West* (1963) repudiated Spengler’s gloom already in its title and developed a hopeful alternative to Spengler and Toynbee in its content. In Part Three, McNeill unfolded the “era of Western dominance” from 1500 to 1950 with the West reaching its most powerful global position during the long nineteenth century (1850-1950). From McNeill’s vantage point in 1963, the future was bright and included the prospect of establishing Western “cosmopolitanism on a global scale,” most likely by the United States.

But no matter how it comes, the cosmopolitanism of the future will surely bear a Western imprint. At least in its initial stages, any world state will be an empire of the West. This would be the case even if non-Westerners should happen to hold the supreme controls of world-wide political-military authority, for they could only do so by utilizing such originally Western traits as industrialism, science, and the public palliation of power through advocacy of one or other of the democratic political faiths (806 f.).

McNeill is still with us and very much alive as a world historian. His son, John McNeill, combines new global and old world history, occasionally in cooperation with his father. [4] John McNeill has won the Toynbee Prize of the Toynbee Foundation in 2010 and will deliver his Prize Lecture on “Toynbee as Environmental Historian” at the January 2011 meeting of the American Historical Association in Boston. The Toynbee Prize Foundation, however, promotes the “New Global History Project.” [5] Why am I bringing this crossover between world and global history up, which seems to contradict my thesis about a paradigm shift in history in the last decade of the twentieth century? Well, I want to point out that conceptual shifts in the humanities and social sciences are not as clear-cut as in the natural sciences. The difference between “traditional” world history and “new” global history is more sharply drawn in my mind than in the reality of contemporary world and global historiography. Having been involved in the struggle for global history since 1990 makes me an interested party and not an objective observer, if such an observer is humanly possible. However, my intellectual partiality does not change the issues of contention.

![Map 4: Two Macrohistorical Units of Analysis](image)

World historians defend, and global historians attack, the Spengler-Toynbee-McNeill assumption that world civilizations must be the core unit of macrohistorical analysis. Other controversial global-versus-world-history issues exist (like the world historical privileging of literate urban cultures), yet the critique of world civilizations as a sensible unit of analysis marks the crucial bone of contention between the two approaches. For global historians, global history is not about the rise and fall of world civilizations. World civilizations are reified constructions of the historical imagination and not an actual force in the real world as Samuel Huntington (1993, 1996) – a latter-day Spengler[6] – would have it one more time after the end of the Cold War. Global processes are what global history is about. Past and present processes of globalization have displaced civilization as the core unit of analysis for global history. Therefore, the insertion of a paradigm shift from world to global history at the close of the twentieth century is warranted on the disciplinary timeline of global history.
14 The civilizations that world history has paid so much attention to are actually extensive cultures, world cultures like China, India, Egypt, and so on. You might want to object at this point and ask, Is the paradigm shift from world civilizations to global processes only a terminological shift, exchanging the term “world civilizations” for “world cultures”? No, I would say, although one could erase the paradigm shift on our timeline and continue with world history up to the present. Why? Because, as the McNeills demonstrate, traditional world history lives on and thrives. As long as governments and societies demand the educational recognition of world cultures – mislabeled “world civilizations” or not –, world history will go strong. Its practitioners are free to spurn the new global history and stick around until they die, as Thomas Kuhn (1996) has noted in 1962 about reluctant (paradigm-change-averse) scientists. I happen to think that Western “civilization” is a misnomer for Western culture, but I still have to teach every so often a large undergraduate lecture class on “Science, Technology, and Medicine in Western Civilization” (my emphasis).

15 The humanities and social sciences are not mono- but multi-paradigmatic; they allow many theoretical flowers to bloom simultaneously. Thus, the paradigm shift on our timeline is not just a matter of terminology; it did occur. Global history has replaced (or complemented, depending on your point of view) the study of world cultures with the study of global economic, political, cultural, environmental, and numerous other transborder processes. Furthermore, it has created an open and rich research environment with new investigative avenues, one of which is the study of civilization in the singular.

16 Do not be surprised that global history still speaks about civilization. As far as I am concerned, the word deserves to be used, but in a completely different sense. Think of mass in the theoretical worlds of Newton and Einstein. The $m$ for mass is the same, but Einstein’s $m$ is related to energy, and Newton’s is not. So with civilization in world and global history. Before the paradigm shift, civilizations were plural, now there is only one, a global technoscientific civilization. It has penetrated the pluriverse of local cultures and brought all local cultures into its singular universe (Schafer 2001, 310). Local cultures, I have argued, are the “flesh and bone” of our brave new world and the global technoscientific civilization is its “nervous system” (302).

Global civilization has no fixed territory; to find its backbone, one has to look for the worldwide matrix of technoscientific networks. This essential constituent defines the civilization of our time as a deterritorialized ensemble of networked technoscientific practices with global reach (312).

17 The practical human interaction with nature has driven what I call civilization from the Stone Age to the Global Age. Archeologists, anthropologists, and historians of science and technology have always paid attention to the various states and developments of human-nature interactions, whereas political, social, and cultural historians have mostly neglected it. I harbor the illusion that this is no longer possible. Technoscience in general, and synthetic biology in particular, have become so important for life on this planet that even The Economist (2010) recently acknowledged with some trepidation that “a Rubicon has been crossed” in May 2010 with the manufacture of the first bacterium without a natural ancestor.

18 When global processes came massively to the fore in the 1990s, the Clinton and Blair administrations embraced them as harbingers of progress (Albrow 2007); various anti- and alter-globalization movements found that they were not socially beneficial, or neutral, but grossly unjust (Pleyers 2010); and many scholars discovered that they had been at work throughout history. How did area studies respond? The complex temporality, factuality, and politicization of globalization, which made the writing of global history possible and exciting – did it engender a paradigm shift in area studies or a road map of how to continue to be relevant? The answer is negative. The implosion of the Soviet Union together with the collateral surge of globalization everywhere threw area studies into a crisis out of which they have yet to emerge renewed.

19 History of science tells us that paradigm shifts are unpredictable. Nobody knows
beforehand what a new paradigm will entail. To use Kuhnian terms for a moment, area studies entered a post-cum-preparadigmatic state of crisis in the last, postsocialist decade of the twentieth century. The formation of another paradigm is the normal way out of this limbo, but being multidisciplinary, area studies are not a normal science in the Kuhnian sense. They do not clamor for a single overarching paradigm around which the various disciplines could rally. This, however, affords area studies another exit: an organizational solution to its crisis conveniently provided by an external force. In fact, a good angel appeared right away, in the second half of the 1990s, not surprisingly in the guise of the Ford Foundation. Yet the good angel botched its job. Instead of forcing a sensible reorganization of area studies, the Ford Foundation fostered a wide range of conceptual improvements that left the fragmentation of area studies intact.

Map 6: Area Studies Timeline (click map to expand)

20 The Ford Foundation was the angel who had taken care of area studies for nearly half a century. Stung by the double-barreled critique of area studies as an “outgrowth of European colonialism” and a source of “intellectual support for American foreign policy in the developing world” (Ford Foundation 1999, x).[9] Ford considered its historical stake in the field and resolved to respond with “renewed efforts” to “revitalize area studies” (vii). Noting the interest of the foundation “to build on the excitement generated by global and local transformations that are everywhere experienced, if still poorly understood” (xiii), Program Officer Toby Alice Volkman announced:

In 1997, the Foundation launched a multi-year, $25-million initiative, entitled “Crossing Borders: Revitalizing Area Studies.” The goal of this initiative is twofold: first, to enhance in-depth study of particular areas, and to activate new, visible, and significant streams of funding; second, to foster innovative approaches to the field’s intellectual foundations and practices in light of a dramatically changed, and increasingly interconnected, world (xi)

21 The Crossing Borders program started in the 1997-98 academic year with thirty campus-based pilot projects[10] loosely divided into six clusters: Reconceptualizations of “Area”; Borders and Diasporas; Border-Crossing Seminars and Workshops; Curricular Transformation and Integration; Collaborations with Nongovernmental Organizations, Activists, and the Media; and Rethinking Specific Areas. The grantees accepted the initial grants of $50,000 gladly – who would not contemplate the areas of area studies for fifty thousand dollars? – but their rethinking invigorated the field only superficially. From a science policy point of view, I would argue that the liberal sprinkling of grant money was counterproductive. It could not overcome the “splendid isolation” of the countless local accommodations that had developed all over the field since the 1950s; and it squandered the opportunity to weave the dispersed and heterogeneous strands of area studies into an adequate whole for the Global Age.

22 This was both unfortunate and unnecessary because the Ford Foundation was aware of the field’s unhealthy fragmentation, which globalization had exposed. In light of “the very different institutional histories, intellectual agendas, and political contexts of African, Russian, Latin American, or Southeast Asian studies” (xi) for example, the foundation concluded:

A renewed area studies field should strive to make connections among these disparate and typically not connected fields. And it should take into account the potential – as well as the complexities – of new forms of worldwide communication and collaboration that were, until recently, unimaginable (ibid.).

23 With other words, the Ford Foundation saw clearly in 1999 that the academic organization of traditional area studies was flawed. It could and should have put its money into two or three big efforts tasked to combine the disparate strands of area studies and forge a new, comparative, and collaborative, area studies approach. Two or three exemplary alternatives of integrated area studies could have become the

Schafer, GSJ (31 December 2010), page 6
leading models to emulate nationally and globally. Hence, the Ford Foundation wasted
the opportunity to evolve area studies into defragmented global/local studies. The
discretionary plural that allows one to speak of area studies in terms of “is” and “are”
would probably be gone by now if this early chance for a reconfiguration of area
studies would not have been missed. I keep using the plural to indicate that area
studies are still more a multitude of different things than a coherent entity.

II

Today, the 1990s are remembered for the rising pitch of the globalization discourse
including the globaloney about the “flattening” of the earth and the “end” of history,
geography, and the nation-state, but not for the revitalization of area studies. The
rethinking of traditional area studies suggested new paradigms without establishing
one. It might therefore be useful at this point to review the handful of ideas that any
reconfiguration of area studies would have to take into account.

Map 7: Leading Ideas (click map to expand)

The collection of works listed chronologically in Map 7 could be expanded and should
perhaps include other contributions; however, I am reaching for significance here and
not completeness. The five selected works represent:

- a general proposal for “restructuring the social sciences” (Wallerstein et al.),
  which I endorse,
- a problematic, postmodern idea of area studies (Guneratne et al.), and
- a set of proposals that can bring area studies up to date in methodology (Frank)
  and theory (Eisenstadt and Chakrabarty).

Let’s begin with “Area Studies, Regional Worlds,” a 24-page White Paper for the Ford
Foundation by Arjun Guneratne, Arjun Appadurai, Jacqueline Bhabha, and Steven
Collins (1997).

The White Paper resulted from a “one-year pilot grant from the Ford Foundation to
the Regional Worlds Program of the Globalization Project at the University of
Chicago.”[11] This program focused on South Asia and “new linkages between area
studies and cultural studies.” Offering “preliminary conclusions and
recommendations,” Guneratne et al. proffered two new paradigms, one for civilization,
and another for geography. Concerning the latter, the authors observed:

The trouble with much of the paradigm of area studies as it now exists
is that it has tended to mistake a particular configuration of apparent
stabilities for permanent associations between space, territory and
cultural organization (Guneratne et al., 2 f.).

Attaching the qualifiers “traditional” (12), “old” (4), and “new” (14) to area studies
and correctly identifying “History and Comparison” as major challenges for a new
area studies” (4), the pamphlet proposed a “new [geographical] paradigm” (14) for
area studies based on the “shift away” (1) from trait to process geographies:

Our major recommendation: “areas” need to be thought about as
results of processes, including research processes, rather than as
objective clusters of cartographic, material or cultural facts.

Emphasizing “process” geographies suggests new ways to approach
both space and time in relation to “areas,” with space becoming more
flexible and porous and time less sequential and cumulative (23).

Echoing the concurrent “critique of metageography” by Martin Lewis and Kären
Wigen (1997) and applying Benedict Anderson’s argument from Imagined
Communities (1983/91) to the “epistemology of areas and regions” (4), the authors
repeatedly invoked the axiom, “areas are not facts but artifacts – of our interests, our
fantasies, our needs to know, to remember, to forget” (4) and “histories – like
geographies – are not facts but artifacts” (5), too. This was clever and appealing, but
not the radical departure that a non-rhetorical paradigm shift would have required.
However, Guneratne et al. managed to do two things. First, with a deconstructionist
move, they carried the blunt force of history, which had just wiped the Soviet Union off the world map and with it much else of what had seemed cast in stone since 1945. Second, they turned the conflation of the actual and epistemological de(con)struction of the areas conceived for fighting the Cold War into a blueprint for “a new architecture for area studies” (3).

In addition, the White Paper called for “Rethinking Civilization” (7).[12] Betting somewhat tortuously on a new paradigm of area studies via a “new paradigm of civilizational study” (8), Guneratne et al. distinguished between the (already obsolete) singular usage of civilization “as an achievement or possession to the barbarism of those without it,” and “civilizations in the plural [that] exist alongside or against each other” (9). They proposed to delegitimize the condescending traditional use of civilization in the singular and pushed for the pluralization of civilization as preferable for two reasons:

First, the cultivation or at least acknowledgment of a certain ideal style or styles of personhood, in behavior, language, cuisine, and the like; and second, the self-conscious practice(s) of preserving artifacts – oral, written, material or other – as a “Tradition,” usually in one or more prestige languages (and thence involving some explicit attitude towards time and history). Not all cultures have such things, for good or ill (7).

“Civilizations in the plural” was of course nothing else but the received world history concept of civilization with a trap door to the discriminatory usage in the phrase that “not all cultures have such things.” Realizing that the difference between world civilizations and cultures could be questioned, the authors preemptively offered the following:

If the word “civilization” is to be usefully different from that of “culture,” then it must surely be because the cultures of some places, times and peoples possess something which others do not. This something is not by any means an obvious superiority on any level, ethical, aesthetic, cognitive or other: any such difference can only be provisional, descriptive and heuristic, for certain purposes (7).

As if culture could not fit that fuzzy bill as well, Spengler’s Faustian culture, for instance: it dwelt on the Nietzschean “will to power” as something peculiar to Western Hochkultur (high culture) in contradistinction to tribal cultures.

Civilizations as special cases of cultures that are by no means superior in any way save in some ways and “for certain purposes” because they have things other cultures do not have amounts to a definitional disaster. The distinction between a singular technoscientific civilization on the one hand, and numerous local cultures on the other, which I have referred to earlier and hawked elsewhere, may be “quixotic”[13] but has comparative advantages. It disentangles the words “culture” and “civilization” and frees civilization up for distinctive usage; applies to all human societies throughout history since they all have human-nature relationships; and focuses on a field of human action the growing relevance of which is inversely proportional to the scant attention it tends to receive from the humanities and social sciences.

Arguably, the technoscientific civilization of the twenty-first century is hugely important, yet it occupies a blind spot in area studies that dwell on “tradition” and “styles of personhood, in behavior, language, cuisine, and the like.” To me, these cultural phenomena are covered by cultural history and cultural studies; they do not need a special paradigm for civilizational studies. However, the blind spot in Guneratne et al. hides a technoscientific beast that is growing wildly and expanding in all cultures – I wonder, how can area studies afford to neglect it? Using the term civilization for the study of humanity’s governance of nature would force us to recognize that blind spot and enable a “bincular understanding of culture and civilization” (Schäfer 2001,313).

Postmodernism, social constructionism, deconstruction, and other critical theories of the time – the “innovative scholarship” (18) of the White Paper – informed the language of Guneratne et al. Arguing that the Cold War areas were socially constructed, which was of course true, they also suggested that the deconstruction of these “artifacts” could/would lead to a new “architecture.” True or untrue, this has not happened yet and questions remain. Are the deconstructed elements of the old area studies structure reusable? Can you build a new structure from deconstructed building blocks? The authors seemed to think that a new paradigm could emerge from their deconstructive operation. Yet, contemplating the teaching of their approach, they admitted:

The pedagogical realization of this type of “constructivist” architecture for a new area studies is potentially much harder than its research realization, though the latter is hardly transparent. It will require hard thinking about maps, texts, language training methods, etc. which is
And sensing a problem, they asked themselves:

How to deconstruct a body of knowledge of which the students are ignorant. Here we start at the beginning and each building block in effect critiques that on which it rests so that the student is exposed to an incremental questioning of the material (18).

Deconstruction is by default a critical operation, conceivable in the future but not in the present when a new paradigm is built. Therefore, a new area studies paradigm, which is most likely an elusive and wrong-headed goal anyway, will have to go beyond the “incremental questioning of the material” and erect a new conceptual framework with new building blocks.

Ian Hacking pointed out in 1999 that social constructivists tend to play fast and loose with the difference “between objects, ideas, and the items named by elevator words such as ‘fact,’ ‘truth,’ and ‘reality’” (68). For example, the language of social construction and deconstruction ignores the heavy-duty Berlin Wall, which ended up in museums and landfills, and focuses on the ideologies of people that concocted Horst Sindermann’s “Anti-Fascist Protection Wall” (antifaschistischer Schutzwall) and Willy Brandt’s “Wall of Shame” (Schandmauer). Before 1989, neither the real-existing barrier nor its mental superstructures were ready for societal (as opposed to individual) deconstruction, not to mention building the new paradigm of a (re)unified Germany, if you will.

ReOrient, Andre Gunder Frank’s passionate plea for a “holistic universal, global, world history – as it really was” (1998, 340) promised to turn “received Eurocentric historiography and social theory upside down by using a ‘globological’ perspective” (xv). Frank’s iconoclastic foray, however self-referential and polemical, wordy and repetitive, rests on a “different paradigmatic perspective” (334) with Asia instead of Europe at the helm of history. Trying to pull “the historical rug out from under the anti-historical/scientific – really ideological – Eurocentrism of Marx, Weber, Toynbee, Polanyi, Braudel, Wallerstein, and most other contemporary social theorists” (xv f.), Frank deployed a set of wild assumptions ranging from the “canon of holism” (326) to his Rankeanistic realism:

- Social theorists “must analyze the whole” (xv), which exhibits “a single global history” (359) driven by “a single worldwide economic system and process” (325).
- The world historical break around 1500, which is crucial for the Eurocentric ideology, is “alleged” and “never took place” (328).
- The “Rise of the West” was nothing but a “climb[ing] up on the shoulders of the Asian economies” (334).
- Up until 1800, the world economy was “by no stretch of the imagination European-centered” (276) but rather “preponderantly Asian-based” (277).
- The Americas, Australia, and Oceania were incorporated into the preexisting “structure and dynamic of the Afro-Eurasian historical process” (352) to form a single global economic system.
- The Industrial Revolution was “like the agricultural one before it ... an inflection in a continuous global development” (343).
- There was “no European technology,” because “technological development was a world economic process” (204).
- An “integrative ‘horizontal’ macrohistory and analysis” is necessary – “Only world history can show how it really was” (338).

It would be too easy to criticize Frank’s simplifications and exaggerations in ReOrient – “right about many things, he is wrong about everything,” as one reviewer summed the work up.[14] So let’s cut to the chase and not quibble even with the major conceptual fault that underpins Frank’s post-Wallersteinian world system: the hypostatization of a quasi-teleological process of world economic development during the last five thousand years (Frank 1991, Frank & Gills 1993).

Refreshingly unpostmodern, Frank believed “the system is really out there in the real world” (1998, xxvi) to be fully grasped and correctly understood. “The currently fashionable ‘globalization’ thesis ... that the 1990s mark a new departure” (340) was laughable for Frank because his world system was truly ancient: it had globalized the Afro-Eurasian world at least since the fourth millennium BCE and then the whole world since 1500. Frank embraced world history as a single global history with little concern for world history’s cherished civilizations and much emphasis on the “Integrative History” that Harvard’s Joseph Fletcher (Manz 1995) had called for earlier.

For history and social theory therefore, the most important and neglected task is to attend to the posthumously published plea of Joseph Fletcher to do integrative “horizontal” macrohistory and
Rectifying Fletcher’s modesty, Frank adopted the methodology of horizontally integrative macrohistory for his five millennia of world history. Noting Fletcher’s important qualification[15] and the doubts I might want to register about the concoction of a macrohistory “fathered” by Leopold von Ranke and William McNeill, the research program (Lakatos) of a history “in which simultaneous events and processes in the world economy are examined and related on a global level” (Frank 1998, 51) is promising for both global history and area studies. Neither field has to subscribe to Frank’s economic determinism plus reductionism but both fields would benefit from a non-exclusive use of the alternative methodology of horizontal historiography. Contrasting conjunctional with vertically separate history, Frank wrote that Fletcher noted with dismay that most historians “are alert to vertical continuities (the persistence of tradition, etc.) but blind to horizontal ones ... At 1500 I see nothing but compartmentalized histories” ... This methodological perspective and its blinders have been made even worse by the introduction of “area studies” in American and other universities, which produce “a microhistorical, even parochial outlook” (344).

The Fletcher-Frank critique of parochial area studies and compartmentalized history has not lost its bite. The challenge of global history warrants a horizontally integrative area studies today as much as yesterday. Hence, this methodological alternative deserves to be followed up – it is a feasible approach toward a defragmented area studies and comparative global history.

Multiple Modernities (Eisenstadt 2000) is a significant contribution to contemporary thinking, though not for its methodology, which is unremarkable, but for its theory, which has leapfrogged beyond the anti-postmodernist stance that Jürgen Habermas took in 1980 when he declared the European project of modernity “unvollendet” (1981, 14). The concept of multiple modernities clarifies that the Western project of modernity is not “unfinished” like a building but growing like a village that has turned into a complex city with many non-Western neighborhoods. In addition, it leaves the naïve assumption of previous modernization theories behind that the European program of modernity “would ultimately take over in all modernizing and modern societies” (Eisenstadt 2000, 1).

Shmuel Eisenstadt – the “principal architect” (Graubard 2000, vi) of the multiple-modernities perspective – characterized the new theoretical outlook as follows:

“The idea of multiple modernities presumes that the best way to understand the contemporary world – indeed to explain the history of modernity – is to see it as a story of continual constitution and reconstitution of a multiplicity of cultural programs (Eisenstadt, 2).

Eisenstadt’s pluralization of the historical, political, and cultural project of modernity faults the arrogant concept of “Western Civilization” as blueprint for the rest of the world and avoids the derivative world civilizations that Guneratne et al. had sold to the Ford Foundation. Nevertheless, Eisenstadt is still beholden to the conventional world historical context and terminology. Frequently backgrounding Karl Jasper’s (1953) “axial period” civilizations (4, 7, 9, 21-23) to modernity, Eisenstadt stages the emergence of multiple modernities as a new axial civilization and calls it the “civilization of modernity” (7).

Eisenstadt’s axial civilization of modernity is not the global technoscientific civilization that I am trying to capture. One does not have to share my point of view to see that it is unnecessary to call Eisenstadt’s multiple modernities a civilization. Speaking about the new global culture of modernity would have been sufficient and appropriate; it also would have been better in terms of theoretical simplicity, as it would have honored the venerable rule of parsimony known as Occam’s razor. However, Eisenstadt has packaged the “continual constitution and reconstitution of a multiplicity of cultural programs” gratuitously as a new civilization and not simply as the emerging culture of the Global Age. Yet irrespective of this needless complication, Eisenstadt’s “civilization” of multiple modernities provides crucial elements for the desideratum of reconfiguring area studies as global/local studies based on the clarification that “modernity and Westernization are not identical” (2 f.) and that modernity means:

- empowering “intensive reflexivity” and questioning traditional authority (3),
- generating an open “conception of the future characterized by a number of possibilities realizable through autonomous human agency” (3),
- recognizing “wider translocal, possibly changing, communities” with new social roles and collective identities (4),
- incorporating peripheral “themes of protest” into “central elements” of the political agenda of societies (6),
• battling over “universal and pluralistic visions” of values and rationality as well as “procedural” versus “substantive” modes of legitimation (7),
• generating “alternative” modernities (communism, fascism and Nazism, for example) as well as the “capacity for continual self-correction” (11),
• expanding modernity’s programs through internal diversification, initially within “the Western civilizational framework,” but now globally (13), and, finally,
• de-Westernizing, that is, “going far beyond the very homogenizing aspects of the original version” (24).

Featuring various regional centers and forms of modernity, Eisenstadt’s multiple-modernities approach has made the global application of a uniform template of Western modernity unacceptable. Moreover, if adopted, the multiple modernities concept can give area studies a cultural understanding of modernity that should work well with the horizontally integrative methodology promoted by Fletcher and Frank.

Provincializing Europe, Dipesh Chakrabarty’s investigation of European thought “from and for the margins” (2000, 16) is a momentous step forward in terms of genuinely universalizing the project of modernity and – by implication rather than design – perhaps the most promising theoretical advancement toward global/local area studies. Published in the same year as Multiple Modernities, Provincializing Europe shows consanguinity in its critique of the “first in Europe, then elsewhere” illusion. However, Chakrabarty does not end with, yet starts from, the consensus that no country, area, or region can be the model of modernity. Leaving India in 1976 for graduate studies in Australia, he could not but embark on the cultural experience of migration. It taught him, like so many others, that “historical differences actually make a difference” (xii):

Until I arrived in Australia, I had never seriously entertained the implications of the fact that an abstract and universal idea characteristic of political modernity everywhere – the idea of equality, say, or of democracy or even the dignity of the human being – could look utterly different in different historical contexts (ibid.).

Originally enmeshed in the peculiar context of Indian Marxism,[17] Chakrabarty had learned in Kolkata that “Marxism was simply ‘true’ ” (xi). Having taken the “global relevance of European thought ... for granted” (xiii), he began to wonder about its seamless applicability only later, after he had joined the postcolonial project of Ranajit Guha’s Subaltern Studies and was finishing his dissertation in Canberra on Bengal jute industry workers (Chakrabarty 1989). Realizing that something was absurdly wrong with his “characters from Bengali and Indian history now clad ... in the European costumes lent by the Marxist drama of history” (2000, x), he set out to research what would become the central proposition of provincializing Europe, namely “that thought is related to places” (xvii).

Around 1990, when Chakrabarty began to localize thought, radical questioning of progress, enlightenment, modernity, and reason was in full swing in Western Europe and the United States. It would have been easy for him to argue that Western universalistic thinking was the problem; however, Chakrabarty could not accept this solution.[18] Unwilling to follow the postmodern lead and “pluralize reason” (xiii), he resolved to situate and investigate the locus of his own critical thinking and then go from there.

It was thus incumbent on me to demonstrate from where – what kind of a place – my own critique issued, for this being-from-a-place is what gave the critique both its charge and its limitations. I needed to think through forms of life that I knew with some degree of intimacy, and hence resorted to material from aspects of the history of the bhadrabak[19] that have deeply molded my own relationship to the world (xviii).

Chakrabarty’s choice of making the particular life-world of his admittedly privileged class the testing ground for his hunch that locality matters had two effects. On the one hand, Indian historians accused him of contributing to the “decline of the subaltern in Subaltern Studies” (see xv f.), on the other hand, he was able to show that the postcolonial attainment of modernity could no longer be seen “simply as a sociological problem of historical transition” but had to be regarded “as a problem of translation, as well” (17). The former marks the limits of political correctness, the latter Chakrabarty’s achievement.

The move from “transition” to “translation” is not a minor change but a potential paradigm shift. The transitional paradigm was rooted in the avant-gardist assumption that the history of the West, at least since the Industrial Revolution, had laid out the future of the rest of the world. Tied-in notions like civilization, development, evolution, and progress allowed Western, as well as non-Western, elites to measure the temporal distance of non-Western societies to the gold standard of Western democracy and modernity. It was used to show third world countries the remaining
historical travel distance to “full” modernity, put “preindustrial” nations into the waiting room of history, and told the illiterate and subalterns of the world how far behind they were in terms of “true” contemporaneity. It accomplished what I have called “temporal cleansing through modernity”[20] and what Chakrabarty has termed the “politics of historicism” (6).

Chakrabarty’s translational theory elevates the “translational processes of modernity” (xviii) in non-Western cultures and life-worlds. It stipulates that postcolonial modernization cannot be understood without the “colonial translations” of the area studies glossary,[21] but requires delving deep into “a non-European language”–Bengali in Chakrabarty’s case – to provide “plural or conjoined genealogies” (20) for European categories such as “capital.” In this respect, Provincializing Europe is “nothing more than a beginning” (ibid.) for a sliver of Asia, yet nonetheless a pivotal achievement, except unilinear thinking without the sacrifice of reason. Setting the linguistic bar high is a welcome challenge of the translational agenda for area studies specialists with intimate knowledge of languages other than English.

The point is not to reject social science categories but to release into the space occupied by particular European histories sedimented in them other normative and theoretical thought enshrined in other existing life practices and their archives (ibid.).

Unencumbered by the legacy of the Western civilizational discourse and unconvinced by the celebration of “contemporary forms of placelessness as an expedient tool to be used in the global struggle against capital” (xvii), Chakrabarty’s work indicates not only how to “provincialize,” that is, properly universalize, our social science categories, but also what to aim for with global/local area studies, namely global literacy about local modernities.

Open the Social Sciences (Wallerstein et al. 1996) is, to this date, the best proposal for “restructuring” the social sciences in behalf of the globalized academic, cultural, and political environment of our time. Proposed by Immanuel Wallerstein, who was then heading the Fernand Braudel Center at SUNY Binghamton, the 105-page report was sponsored by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and prepared by an international team of eminent scholars chaired by Wallerstein.[22]

Envisioning a “major realignment” (73) of the institutional structures of higher learning and advanced research in the early twenty-first century, the report’s title indicated its major thrust: “open the social sciences” meant that entrenched disciplinary enclosures should come down or become much more permeable at least. Questioning the continuing validity of the disciplinary fragmentation into economics, political science, sociology, anthropology, and history, as well as the standard division between natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities – the “trimodal pattern of superdomains” (72) –, the report suggested four structural ‘openings’ without assuming that anyone should or would be “in a position to decree wholesale reorganization” (96):

- “The expansion of institutions, within or allied to the universities, which would bring together scholars for a year’s work in common around specific urgent themes” (103).
- “The establishment of integrated research programs within university structures that cut across traditional lines, have specific intellectual objectives, and have funds for a limited period of time (say about five years)” (103 f.).
- “The compulsory joint appointment of professors” (104) in two departments.
- “Joint work for graduate students” (105), also in two departments.

The report acknowledged the “long history” of academic reforms in the United States, but noting “strong internal political pressure both for and against restructuring the social sciences” (99) in the U.S., it looked more expectantly elsewhere for “creative experimentation” (98), particularly to Africa, Latin America, and postsocialist Europe, including former East Germany (see 100 ff.). Asia, which would figure prominently in any such report today, was conspicuously absent, as China, India, and South Korea were not mentioned. However, nothing much in terms of the proposed openings has happened anyway, anywhere. Reforming the whole complex of the social sciences is probably too big a task for an established institution, even if ample funds would be available. Moreover, it seems that the global expansion of Western-type university systems, which sped up in the second half of the twentieth century and is still under way, especially in countries with emerging economies, has had little time for experimentation, even when university and research developments started more or less from scratch and innovation was not hampered by entrenched academic positions.

The lesson to draw from the failure to restructure anything of consequence so far is not that it is futile to think big about furthering the mission of the social sciences to understand and improve social life. Actually, Open the Social Sciences should be required reading for all university administrators and faculty with an interest in the
According to the Wallerstein report, area studies were “probably the most notable academic innovation after 1945” (36), not only because they were multidisciplinary “by definition” (37), but also, and more importantly, because their practitioners had to overcome the traditional Western “antinomies” (95) of past and present, idiographic and nomothetic, modern and non-modern, as well as civilized and barbaric. Doing area studies required that historians (idiographic) work with economists, political scientists, and sociologists (nomothetic) and vice versa, or that Oriental studies specialists studying the literature of high cultures cooperate with ethnographers and anthropologists dealing with illiterate tribes. Thus, “considerable artificiality in the sharp institutional separations of social science knowledge” (38) was uncovered. The assumption of disciplinary distinctiveness began to “wane” and a trend “toward a more comprehensive social science” (47) emerged.

Yet the overly sharp distinction between the “two cultures” of the social and natural sciences and the “third” culture of the humanities remained. Wallerstein et al. argued convincingly that this tripartite division was “no longer as self-evident as it once seemed” and that the social sciences should play a decisive role in its “potential reconciliation” (69), furthermore, that the “artificial boundaries between humans and nature” (75) had to be broken down. Other obstacles to be cleared away were the inflated ‘Newtonian’ goals of predictive and quantitative exactness as well as parochial claims to universality. Quoting the African scholar Engelbert Mveng, the Wallerstein report underlined that the theoretical assumptions and premises of the social sciences “must be decolonized” (56).

Open the Social Sciences has set our sights on an inclusive social science with a “pluralistic universalism” (60) that clarifies that “universalism and particularism are ... not necessarily opposed” (57) and that “pushing the social sciences in the direction of combating the fragmentation of knowledge is also pushing it in the direction of a meaningful degree of objectivity” (92).

III

If globalization and the quick and unexpected ending of the Cold War had sent area studies scrambling for a firm footing in the Global Age, it does not show anymore. Without a ruling paradigm and strong external raison d’être, area studies are doing business as usual. Why defragment area studies? Funding provided, they will happily continue to exist in numerous academic constellations with different theoretical approaches, regional foci, intellectual goals, and political affiliations. David Szanton, an anthropologist who had worked on area studies at the Ford Foundation and the Social Science Research Council before joining the University of California as director of the Social Science Research Council before joining the University of California as director of International and Area Studies, is confident that area studies can handle the “new geo-politics and the softening of national and area boundaries” (2004, 27). He has given an excellent definition of area studies as they are:

“Area Studies” is best understood as a cover term for a family of academic fields and activities joined by a common commitment to: (1) intensive language study; (2) in-depth field research in the local language(s); (3) close attention to local histories, viewpoints, materials, and interpretations; (4) testing, elaborating, critiquing, or developing grounded theory against detailed observation; and (5) multidisciplinary conversations often crossing the boundaries of the social sciences and humanities (4).[23]

Defending area studies against its “external critics” who had presented the field as ideologically “homogenous” and “narrowly political,” Szanton countered that area studies are “extremely diverse” (vii) in terms of academic agendas: what “may have started from relatively narrow view of US ‘national interest,’ ... diverged dramatically over the past 50 years” (30). Indeed – and that is the enduring problem. Area studies have become balkanized. They have diverged so much over time that they have become ill adjusted to the transnational and otherwise challenging features of global history. To overcome the theoretical and practical incoherence of this fragmentation, area studies must rally the far-flung “family of academic fields” and defragment their activities.

To be sure, the five elements of Szanton’s definition are indispensable and must stay in effect to guarantee the cultures-based knowledge production of area studies. Yet the institutional fragmentation of area studies is blinding and counterproductive. Szanton’s use of “cover term” for area studies is correct for area studies as they are (a multitude of things) but not as they should be (a coherent entity). Area studies have to be defragmented for a future definition, thus far unknown. However, we already know why an overarching new and/or postmodern paradigm is most likely not in the

Schafer, GSJ (31 December 2010), page 13
cards; we have discussed the two most promising theoretical advancements: Eisenstadt’s cultural concept of multiple modernities and Chakrabarty’s pioneering move toward global literacy about local modernities; and we can be certain about the utility of horizontal comparison advocated by Fletcher and Frank. With other words, we are not completely in the dark about area studies as they should be.

Wallerstein et al. have presented the overcoming of disciplinary boundaries in area studies as a model for the rest of the social sciences and that was a mistake. Instead of tackling the whole edifice of “the social sciences,” the Gulbenkian Committee report could and should have focused its historical and epistemological insights in 1996 on the promising case of area studies, which were already halfway “open” a social science. This may not have prevented the subsequent blunder of the Ford Foundation, but it could have pushed area studies more forcefully in the direction of global/local studies as a transdisciplinary endeavor.

“Transdisciplinary” is a relatively new term used in Europe to indicate research that involves both internal cooperation and external communication: on the one hand, cooperation among academic specialists trained in different disciplines and, on the other hand, communication between academics and stakeholders of real-world problems. Solving environmental problems, for example, can make it necessary (according to the Handbook of Transdisciplinary Research)

to transgress boundaries between disciplines and especially between different academic cultures, such as between the humanities and the natural sciences. Furthermore, the doors of laboratories and libraries must be opened and researchers have to step into problem fields and engage in mutual learning with people in the life-world (Hadorn et al. 2008, 5).

Thus, transdisciplinarity goes beyond multidisciplinarity. It has a pragmatic and idealistic angle that involves academics and non-academics in discursive problem solving. It is not too difficult to imagine a transdisciplinary application of Chakrabarty’s translational program in which area studies researchers “engage in mutual learning with people in the life-world.”

To envision area studies in a future definition as “global/local” studies assumes acceptance of the proposition that area studies without global studies are blind and global studies without area studies are empty. The tight combination of global and local contains an implicit warning about localism and globalism – the ideologies of the local and the global. Localism disregards global contexts focusing exclusively on local phenomena, while globalism fails to recognize local contexts, such as people’s languages, life-worlds, and cultures. The road to a future definition of what used to be called area studies is therefore straightforward: merge area and global studies to create global/local studies.

Notes

A first draft of this article – “Mapping a Challenge: Global History and Area Studies” – was presented in June 2010 in an international conference on Area Studies in a Globalizing World at Karl-Franzens-University in Graz, Austria, and a second draft – “The Challenge of Global History and the Future of Area Studies” – in July 2010 in the Futures Research Committee of the XVII World Congress of Sociology of the International Sociological Association (ISA) in Gothenburg, Sweden.


[7] I remember asking a colleague some years ago, how can you write modern history without paying attention to the consequences of science and technology since ca. 1850? He looked at me in utter disbelief. My department used to have three historians of science and technology, now I am the only one.

[8] The reference to Edward Alsworth Ross (1866-1951) in this map is a placeholder for the prehistory of area studies, which is not covered in this paper. Ricardo Salvatore has characterized Ross’ Outlines of Sociology as “an effort in transnational comparison that would later be crucial to the formation of Area Studies.” See Ricardo D. Salvatore, “Worldly Sociology: Edward Ross and the Societies ‘South of Panama’,” in United States Strategies for Knowing South America (Manuscript, Buenos Aires: 2010), 43.


[10] The Ford Foundation had sent an RFP to 270 U.S. universities and colleges with area studies programs, which yielded an applications pool of 205; see Ford Foundation, Crossing Borders: Revitalizing Area Studies (New York, N.Y.: Ford Foundation, 1999), xi-f.


[12] For a valid subsequent attempt, see Said Amir Arjomand and Edward A. Tiryakian, eds., Rethinking Civilizational Analysis, Sage Studies in International Sociology 52 (London; Thousand Oaks, Calif.: SAGE Publications,2004). However, unlike cultural studies and history, which have been quite successful academically, cultural civilizational analysis has not yet made big inroads intellectually or gained a large following among graduate students.

[13] Guneratne et al. decided against giving civilization a non-traditional meaning: “The term is far too deeply entrenched for any attempts at removing it to be more than quixotic” (?).


[15] “It is not completely out of the question that ... it might just be possible to tie in a few aspects of pre-Columbian American history with developments of the Old World, but short of such intellectual gymnastics, global integrative history is not possible before the sixteenth century.” Joseph F. Fletcher, “Integrative History: Parallels and Interconnections in the Early Modern Period, 1500-1800 [1985],” in Studies on Chinese and Islamic Inner Asia, ed. Beatrice Forbes Manz (Variorum, 1995), 7.

[16] Entities must not be multiplied unnecessarily: entia non sunt multiplicanda praeter necessitatem.

[17] See Chakrabarty 2000, xiii: “Marx was a household Bengali name. His German upbringing was never commented upon.”

[18] In 1988, Chakrabarty concluded in the Preface of his first book: “Though aware of the critiques of the Enlightenment now being launched in the name of postmodernism, I simply do not see how any definition or practice of ‘politics’ in present-day India can altogether escape this ‘struggle’ [for modernity].” Dipesh Chakrabarty, Rethinking Working-Class History: Bengal, 1890-1940 (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1989), xv.

[19] “Bhadralok ... is Bengali for the new class of ‘gentlefolk’ who arose during colonial times (approximately 1757 to 1947) in Bengal. It is still used to indicate members of the upper middle and middle classes of Bengal.” See Wikipedia.

[20] “The Modern Age established a solution that was simple and ingenious but also devastating for large parts of the human race: temporal cleansing through modernity. Modernity became the benchmark of the new order. It drastically reduced the rising number of ‘others’ in the world by placing all non-Europeans on lower evolutionary
levels. The contemporaneity of Europeans with ever more different others was thus made to disappear. Others became unmodern and therefore non-contemporaneous; they were still there but no longer in the present time.” Wolf Schäfer, “Global History and the Present Time,” in Wiring Prometheus: Globalisation, History and Technology, ed. Peter Lyth and Helmuth Trischler (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 2004), 113 f. The essay is available online. — My critique of non-contemporaneity as ideology and Chakrabarty’s critique of historicism overlap though I had not read Provincializing Europe at the time. In fact, my essay was first published in a German version in 1994; see Wolf Schäfer, Ungleichzeitigkeit als Ideologie: Beiträge zur Historischen Aufklärung (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Sozialwissenschaft, 1994), 132-55.

[21] “A standard … feature of the monograph in Asian or area studies was a section called the ‘glossary,’ which came at the very end of the book. …The glossary reproduced a series of ‘rough translations’ of native terms, often borrowed from the colonialists themselves. These colonial translations were rough not only in being approximate (and thereby inaccurate) but also in that they were meant to fit the rough-and-ready methods of colonial rule. To challenge that model of ‘rough translations’ is to pay critical and unrelenting attention to the very process of translation” (17).

[22] The Gulbenkian Commission team was comprised of six members from the social sciences (Wallerstein, Juma, Kocka, Mushakoji, Taylor, and Trouillot), two from the natural sciences (Fox Keller and Prigogine), and two from the humanities (Lecourt and Mudimbe).


References


———. "The Global Ages." 1995, online only.


