



New Departures

European Studies: Always Already There and Still in Formation

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Comparative European Politics (2003) 1, 5–20. doi:10.1057/palgrave.cep.6110004

European Studies is perhaps the most basic model behind all area studies programs (at least in America) and yet at the same time an odd fit with the others. It is the model because the idea of Europe as a multiplicity of nations and states united by ‘civilization’, history, geography, religion, and politics informed the very idea that regions should be units of academic and indeed public interest. It is an odd fit because the others are all joined by a consistent issue of cultural distance, figuring more as America’s others than as its ancestors, and because it is very differently integrated into the organization of academic work.

European Studies is an odd fit first of all because studies of Europe so deeply shaped most of the social science and humanities disciplines, providing them at least tacitly with their conceptions of the unmarked ‘normal’ and the seeming universal. European Studies is thus much less than other area studies fields an implicit challenge to disciplinary scholarship (although making explicit the specificity of European history, politics, and culture within the world’s range of variations requires at least as much critical effort as presenting the postcolonial or Third World other).

European studies is an odd fit too because it cannot reasonably be conceived as ‘remedial’. I have heard some Europeanists complain of the ‘shocking neglect’ of Europe in American social science. However, while American ethnocentrism and the convenience of studying what is close at hand make Europe a little under-represented by comparison to the US, this is hardly true by comparison to the rest of the world.

Finally, European Studies is in four senses self-regarding rather than other-regarding. (1) In European history, the conceptualization of Europe was shaped by the use of others — both the “high” cultures of Orientalism and the ‘primitives’ of Africa, America, and the Pacific — as mirrors for reflecting on Europe as the West. (2) In America this continued, but was overlaid also with the image of the Old World compared to the new, a view of heritage and (sometimes discarded) history constitutive for both the project of national identity and claims to high culture by elites within it. (3) In Cold War terms,



European Studies was part of the construction of the West rather than the communist East. (4) And in terms of modernization it was as basic to the ‘developed’ world and the idea of modernity itself as America and not part of the underdeveloped other.

In short, European Studies has never been simply the study of a region, but always complexly interwoven with ideas about modernity, the West, Christendom, democracy, and civilization itself. This adds both to the importance and to the challenges of the study of the region and especially to the importance of a nuanced comparative approach that seeks to avoid the simple reproduction of European self-regard as part of the unquestioned heritage of social science.

European Identity

The idea of Europe is ancient, most especially as the Northern fringe of the Roman Empire. It took somewhat more coherent form as the domain of Western Christendom, from Charlemagne and the Holy Roman Empire through the Crusades. This was certainly a claim to collective identity, ‘we’ in relation to ‘the others’. And the early others were as crucially (although not always as dramatically) the Orthodox Christian traditions as Islam. Later, of course, the idea of Europe continued to be invented in contrast to non-Europeans, especially in colonies.

This is not only a matter of simple racial–ethnic contrast, the declaration of Europeans that they constitute the civilized and rightly dominant people. It is also and perhaps even more influentially the project of constructing Europeanness — and specific national versions of Europeanness — as educational ventures. Put another way, colonies posed the challenge of teaching European civilization in a more explicit way — to the colonized, of course, but equally to the colonizers. As has been remarked recently (but not always recognized), for example, the first chair of English was in India. In contexts like India, Europeans needed to learn how to understand and reproduce civilizational identities that were less problematic at home. In a different way, this was also an issue for settler colonies, like Australia, where the production of Europeanness was both a claim to connection with ‘mother countries’ and like whiteness a bond among occupiers.

However, Europeanness was not only a contrastive identity distinguishing a privileged group from those it would dominate. It was also an internally integrative identity. While people of a range of statuses were mobilized for projects like the Crusades, Europeanness was produced particularly among elites. It was a product of Latinate literacy throughout the Middle Ages, most especially in the upper reaches of the Church but also of court society and diplomacy. It was also a product of the circulation and interconnection of elites



through royal marriages and the movements of courts they entailed. From early on, though, European identities were also produced in the movement of somewhat less exalted elites. Long-distance marriages cemented ties among Europe's wealthier Jewish families. Artisan craftsmen made journeys across what would later become national borders to work in a range of cities, drawn both by employment opportunities like the construction of cathedrals and by the value of learning different local versions of a craft. Pilgrimages drew not only aristocrats but also merchants and craftsmen as Chaucer made clear. And long-distance trade was significant throughout Europe.

The building of a European identity thus actually preceded the development of nation-states within Europe — although of course vernacular cultures and ethnic forerunners to nations were also old. The process of nation building tended to obscure the commonalities of European identity even though it was in fact one of them. Europe was the first region in which the nation-state spread widely as an ideal—typical conjuncture of cultural and political organization. Social solidarity, power, and even language was reorganized across the continent in a process of simultaneously amalgamating smaller polities of greater or lesser previous autonomy, achieving spatial compactness in the territories of larger ones and more sharply demarcating borders. Administrative systems, transport systems, and markets were all developed in ways that led to greater links within countries and reduced direct ties among the citizens of different countries. However, at the same time, the development of the European nation-state reflected a high degree of 'institutional isomorphism' as different governments determined that they needed similar ministries, customs agencies, and even systems of military rank. They learned from each other, in brief, and competed with each other in a European field of states over stakes that included not only relative power but also relative prestige and prosperity.

The development of new media joined with improved transport to increase flows of information across borders even while the borders themselves came to be increasingly policed. The new media, like newly standardized vernacular languages, were organized mainly on national lines (although also sometimes in ways that reflected the older city and hinterland model). They reported on doings throughout the continent, as well as farther afield, and joined in the production and reproduction of a common European identity. Even the very ventures of colonization reflected not merely a competitive 'rush' among European states for unclaimed territories but the combination of continued institutional learning from each (despite variations in colonial systems) and mass media mobilizations of popular sentiment on behalf of colonial projects, including not only their denigrations of non-Europeans but their intra-European rivalries.

War would of course be among the outcomes, but increased academic study was also a non-trivial result. Indeed, on the eve of World War I, all the major



European powers were sponsoring academic inquiries into each other's cultures, political systems, economies, and social organization (as well as less academic inquiries into their military capacities). France, for example, sent Emile Durkheim to Germany. The traveling scholars sought theory, methods, and data, of course, but equally they sought insight into the very development of university-based academia. This was increasingly seen as a national asset and a token of modernization.

America's Europe

Nowhere was this more true than in America, which played a distinctive role in the production of Europe (and European Studies). All the settler colonies — Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa among others — had special relationships to Europe. In most cases, though, this was strongly a relationship to particular European nation-states (even if, as in South Africa, two in succession). Even in Canada, Britain and France were distinct poles of identity to a very large extent with other Europeans relatively marginal. However, in the United States the colonial tie was severed earlier than in other settler colonies and 19th century immigration was diversely multinational although overwhelmingly European. Different immigrant groups maintained strong ties to European homelands, constructing 'hyphenated' identities, and the WASP elite remained anglophile. Nonetheless, as the higher educational system developed it produced a distinctive preliminary education in European high culture. 'Western civilization' was constructed out of a mix of classical antiquity, European history, and great works of modern European thought, art, and literature.

Much of the intellectual background lay in the close relation between 18th and 19th century European thought and classical antiquity. Europeans simultaneously celebrated the glory that was Greece, the grandeur that was Rome, and the sense that they were progressing beyond bounds the ancients had never breeched, at least in some fields. John Stuart Mill's fiercely modernizing father taught him Latin and Greek almost as soon as he could walk. Thinkers like Mill and Darwin, Tocqueville and Hegel, and indeed Marx all exemplified the 19th century's simultaneous appreciation of the ancients and desire for progress. These thinkers were read in many European countries. They participated in a common European intellectual world, although most were always intensely conscious of national differences as well. They engaged each other and drew on a common 'conversation' with the ancients. However, it was a distinctive feature of American universities and colleges not only to demand grounding in the classics, but to marry this to systematic and cross-national teaching of European 'culture'.



Even as American universities and colleges gradually gave up the classical curriculum after the 1870s, they continued to embrace aspects of it rethought as the roots of European civilization. And even as they took up the curricular structure of the ‘major’ patterned after the research fields of the PhD degree (itself a European, specifically German, import), they continued to consecrate the study of Western Civilization as a necessary preliminary. Indeed, this was in part the homage paid to classics, history, and philosophy when the curriculum was redesigned to emphasize the sciences (including social sciences). And it is significant how little American thought the Western Civilization courses incorporated, how much they remained European until their 1960s’ crisis.

But though the consecration of European Studies as the necessary foundation for higher education ensured it a place, it also tended to ossify it. This quickly became a course that everyone had taken — and thought their descendants should take in the same form. At its most trivial, it was the canonical course that prepared gentlemen to make appropriate allusions in after-dinner speeches and political debates. Even when developed with the most depth and thought, though, it remained rooted in appreciation for the heritage of a seemingly already established tradition rather than the production of new knowledge. It was also an introduction to an enormously broad range of thought, cultural production, and history and thus did not reflect any specific field. Growing specialization in academia reduced its connection to current scholarship. With the rise of analytic philosophy, for example, philosophers tended increasingly to withdraw from teaching Western Civilization (or even the history of European philosophy; their lower-level undergraduate teaching centered more on courses like logic, each abstracted from attention to any particular cultural context). Historians continued to teach Western Civilization, and some, especially intellectual historians, continued to champion the course and the intellectual tradition it reflected. Textbook authors and teachers tried to draw in the results of new research and intellectual perspectives. However, while the Western Civilization approach remained prominent background, the 20th century saw the rise of a new perspective centered in social science.

The new social science disciplines all claimed European roots and their early American leaders appropriated European theoretical foundations. Some were immigrants and others studied in Europe. If Social Darwinism was an American invention, it nonetheless clearly built on Spencer and Darwin. From Boas to DuBois, Sorokin to Parsons, Schumpeter to Veblen, social scientists were engaged in a transatlantic conversation. However, social science was engaged not only in the appropriation of disciplinary identities and histories; it was engaged in the production of new knowledge. European countries became the focus of empirical study as well as the ground of contrast for studies of



America and of the rest of the world. American anthropology, thus, was minimally shaped by the problematics of colonial administration central to British and much other European research, but heavily influenced by ethnological traditions and the European study of language and folklore. Many American economists and political scientists were keen to stress the distinctiveness of American institutions, but attention to European ones was basic to the comparison. And if the field of comparative politics would eventually attend broadly to states around the world, it grew out of the comparisons of European states to each other and Europe to America — as for example in Gabriel Almond's and Sidney Verba's famous studies of civic culture. These were rooted in accounts of how democracy grew in Europe and America, which they transformed into the basis for new empirical research. Much the same was true more generally for the research on 'modernization' so influential in the postwar era. Although this became mainly an approach to studying the less developed world, its base lay in historical studies of development in Europe.

Decentered Europe

In many of these studies, Europe became something of an unmarked category, simply 'the modern'. This would set the stage for later critiques and efforts to 'provincialize Europe', to borrow a phrase from Dipesh Chakrabarty. More generally, social scientists struggled to disengage the specifically European from putatively more universal accounts. While some would focus on the critique of 'Eurocentrism', others would emphasize that the canonical accounts did not do justice to Europe either, and needed to be revised on the basis of new research.

Attention to the colonial and postcolonial world also offered another kind of challenge to the conventional approach to Europe. If the critique of Eurocentrism emphasized the fallacy of treating Europe as the world, this second critique emphasized the fallacy of treating European identity, culture, and politics as internal developments of Europe itself. Rather, new work stressed, European ventures outside of Europe made and remade the notion of Europe itself. This was already an important issue in the era of the Crusades. It became still more important in the context of voyages of exploration, the development of colonial empires, migrations, and global capitalism.

European self-understanding was heavily shaped by the rise of nationalism and especially the 19th century organization of academic history as national history. While nationalist imaginaries recognized the situation of each nation amid a cluster of comparable others, they encouraged an account of the sources of each as essentially internal. This tended to obscure the nature of



conquest and immigration and also early projects of ‘ethnic cleansing’. The famous 1066 invasion of England, thus, involved Normans only ambiguously ‘French’ and English who were hardly ethnically homogeneous. Yet the Normans become a part of English history and culture, not simply foreign to it. Indeed, only a few decades before the Battle of Hastings, England’s King Ethelred (wonderfully known to history as ‘the unready’ or more politely ‘the ill-advised’ and married to the daughter of Richard I of Normandy) had issued a proclamation ordering all Danes out of his kingdom; many who resided in Oxford were killed in the St Brice’s Day Massacre (which the king found just and honorable, even though it involved the murder of men, women, and children who had taken refuge in the sanctuary of a church). Similar events took place in all European countries, partially undoing earlier mixtures but also creating new ones. The repression of Muslims and Jews in Spain is perhaps the most dramatic early modern case, but obviously the complicated project and horrific results have continued throughout the modern era, afflicting different countries at different times.

An implication of this restructuring of European ideas of who belongs where that is not always remarked is the extent to which it involved a construction of Europe as a collection of nations with putatively rightful claims to specific territories and governed by discretely sovereign states. The idea of a Europe of the nations, thus, is not simply a new way of thinking about European integration in the context of the EU. It is a renewal of an old — but for the most part modern — understanding of Europe. This built on the earlier use of ‘nations’ as a term for people of different culture, language, and descent, but the older ‘nations’ represented for example in medieval universities and church assemblies (e.g., Lombardy, Piedmont) were not constructed as integral political units and do not map neatly on the new state order. They suggested the residues of vernacular differences within the common culture of Latinate Christendom, but not the construction of peoples putatively bound together by history and culture and constituting the bases for evaluating the legitimacy of states. It was this new notion that gave Europe clear standing as a location in the world, and as constituted internally by symmetrical but discrete states. And certainly, in the colonies themselves, Europeans knew each other both as members of the same racialized dominant group, and as citizens of different European states — and their legal systems commonly provided distinctively for other Europeans.

This new notion also implied the self-production of Europe (just as it did the self-production of each nation within Europe). And thus it suggested the treatment of exploration, colonization, and globalization of markets as something active Europeans did to the passive rest of the world. Much can be (and has been) said about this, but the point I want to make here is that much of the production of modern Europe has involved borrowings and



appropriations from non-European sources — from Arabic numerals, to South Asian pajamas, and Chinese habits of cleaning teeth. Moreover, much of the production of modern Europe comes specifically from the colonial venture. Techniques of European state-making were developed in colonial administration and extended into the domestic affairs of national states. The rise of standing armies as part of the conquest and domination of colonies became also a part of domestic life and, both in military service and in its representation in the media, a source of some integration among different localities within nations. The rise of capitalism and modern industry was not simply a discrete event within Europe but an event in the relation of Europe to international trade.

Not least of all, the cultural traditions of Europe were enriched by production from outside the European homelands and metropolitan centers. Predictably, this is most true for French, Spanish, Portuguese and English, made world languages partly by colonial projects. Paris is a center for world music and French a vital language for African literature (even as it declines as a *lingua franca*). Latin American literary production now outstrips Iberian in fame and vitality. Prominent exemplars of English literature and drama have come surprisingly often from Ireland, from colonial outposts in Asia, and even from those for whom English is a second language. From Joyce and Beckett to Stoppard, Rushdie, and Achebe, English literature is far more than the product of native English authors. Some of this is simply writing elsewhere in originally European languages, but most of it is also an enrichment and transformation of literary traditions initially more narrowly European. And it has wrought transformation as well in humanities fields focused on European studies.

Changing Conceptualizations

The conceptualization of Europe has shifted over time. From centering on the notion of Western Christendom it reflected increasingly a field of competition among strengthening states. Although migrations, long-distance trade, and cultural flows characterized Europe from ancient times, with ebbs and flows, the rewriting of European history in terms of the nation-state emphasized the internal production of each country and a notion of Europe as the aggregate of these ostensible separate processes. At the same time, claims to the common inheritance of classical antiquity reinforced a sense of commonalty among Europeans, especially elites. And projects of modernization reflected a commonalty within the competitive project: the partially shared vision (and stakes) of modernization, prosperity, and political legitimacy. These intertwined stories provided the main framework for the conceptualization of Europe until the late 20th century. Even projects that reached beyond the



framework —like colonialism and migration — were largely addressed in ways that reproduced it. The story of migration to America, for example, was analyzed as a story of modernization that brought some Europeans to a new country where their old national and religious traditions bore new fruit. It was sometimes a morality tale suggesting that Europe needed to modernize more, sometimes one that stressed the importance of claims to European heritage for American status groups. However, it was not taken until recently as a basis for problematizing the very idea of Europe.

In the late 20th century, the study of Europe was revitalized and the traditional idea(s) of Europe rethought. One impetus came from the perspective of ‘postcolonies’ trying to establish the meaning of Europe in their histories. Another came from efforts to reconsider the entanglement of Europe with ideas of civilization and progress. This was shaped notably by efforts to come to terms with the Holocaust and the 20th century’s legacy of wars. It was also influenced by a range of social movements that generated interests in ‘identities’ and ‘differences’ — gender and ethnicity among others — that had been subordinated in the dominant accounts of European history (and, indeed, contemporary politics, culture, and social life). Not least, the construction of welfare states seemed a culmination of many modern European ideas, projects, and struggles. Although these provided enormous benefits, they also generated new and largely unexpected dissatisfactions (and the new social movements reflected some of these). Finally, the project of the EU generated both a growing interest in itself and a new interest in conceptualizing Europe. This was both part of an analytic project as researchers sought to understand what was happening in Europe, and of an ideological-pedagogical project as some European leaders sought to teach students a European self-understanding supportive of the EU (and particular visions of the EU).

European Studies in the Context of Area Studies

The study of modern Europe became newly exciting, thus, especially in and after the 1960s. Notions that European social democracy might offer a third way between the main Cold War adversaries added interest. At the same time, Europe itself was redefined by the East/West split. The idea of Western Christendom and centuries of political and economic differences had always privileged the West in the definition of Europe, but this took on new force after the Russian Revolution and especially after World War II. Catholic countries with stronger industrial traditions than, say, Greece or Portugal were nonetheless distinguished from the main self-understanding of Europe by their communist governments.



Eastern Europe figured prominently in the rise of the new area studies fields, while Western Europe was largely left out of the primary area studies vision that took root in the postwar period. This reflected partly the presence of Europe as the unmarked ‘us’ already shaping much scholarship, and partly the very critique of this omnipresence of Europe (and Euro-America) in scholarship. This was to an extent overdetermined by the reluctance of many American specialists on Europe to see themselves as Europeanists precisely because they saw themselves as specializing in one or another European national history, or politics, or culture. Even as enrolments collapsed in British history, French history, and German history classes, thus, the discipline of history in the US was slow to reconfigure to give greater emphasis to a common European history. And whatever the shifting interests of students and professors, a variety of donors to American universities were proud of their hyphenated European heritages and wished to give to programs encouraging the study of (or perhaps broadly, less research-based cultural interest in) various European countries, including many of those not associated with traditional American elites. Before it established a physical and conceptual place for European studies, for example, NYU had founded specific programs on and often consecrated specific buildings to France and Germany and also to Ireland, Greece, and Spain. Individual European governments have long supported such ventures as part of their cultural diplomacy; only recently has the EU begun to fund ‘European Union Studies Centers’ as a counterweight. In addition, although ‘EuroAmerican’ has been used as a term of critique (alongside Eurocentrism), there is no strong European pan-ethnic identity in America. There is Asian pan-ethnicity and Hispanic pan-ethnicity (and the partially analogous construct of African-American) but no European pan-ethnicity even on college campuses. European ancestry remains either the unmarked ‘normal’ or constructed in national terms.

Several of the factors that encouraged development of other area studies fields did not apply in the case of Europe. It was (perhaps ironically) not a security concern in the context of the Cold War—even though many of the biggest armed clashes of the 20th century occurred in Europe, both before and after the Cold War. Accordingly, it was not a recipient of support from many of the foreign area studies funding programs established as adjuncts to American security and defense interests. It was not an underdeveloped region in need of development assistance (after the era of the Marshall plan). Nor was European social science underdeveloped and in need of remedial help so that it could play an effective role of the sort modernization theory and aid agencies assigned to African, Latin American, South Asian, and Southeast Asian social science. These were not just issues in the main postwar wave of creation of area studies programs, they were issues also when areas studies projects were reorganized in the wake of the collapse of communism after 1989.



The area studies fields had been built as interdisciplinary projects to generate knowledge about regions traditionally neglected by American academic disciplines. Some reflected older roots in traditions of European scholarship on Arab, Indian, Japanese, and Chinese societies (including the self-declared Orientalism that predated use of the term as an epithet). The interdisciplinary character of the area studies project reflected the conviction that it was important to understand politics, culture, economics, and social life in relation to each other — to place particular facts in their rightful contexts. It was bolstered by the notion that behind at least many regions lay a common ‘civilizational’ heritage. And it was linked to the idea that expertise depended on linguistic competence and a first-hand study whenever possible. However, it also reflected the practical rationale behind new funding initiatives, the need for American experts on ‘foreign areas’, a need felt with new acuteness not just in the wake of World war II and in the midst of the Cold War, but in the context of postcolonial struggles, Third World revolutions including that nearby in Cuba, the fabled ‘loss’ of China, and a variety of regional wars and insurrections. Although provision of development assistance was itself often sold on the basis of similar security concerns, this in turn generated its own demand for context-specific knowledge, which area studies programs tried to meet. However, Europe did not fit the standard picture. To the extent that European Studies flourished as such in the postwar period, it was on the basis of the continuation of older elite interests in Europe, some interest in new processes of political change, and simply the attractions of symmetry —as universities and funders divided the world into areas for study.

An ironic limit to European Studies —although not to the study of Europe —was the fact that it was much more readily integrated into the non-area-specific disciplines of the social sciences, partly because of ease of linguistic access, superior data sources, strong collegueship with well-trained and well-funded European researchers, and simply its acceptance based on prior prestige and tacit fit with dominant disciplinary assumptions. European research was central to economic history, comparative politics, and comparative and historical sociology. Studies based on European data were prominent across subfields of the social sciences and used to establish or test models presented as more or less general, not only to address the distinctiveness of European cases. And of course European literature, art, and culture had central places in the humanities disciplines. Many researchers worked on Europe without identifying specifically with European studies. Not a problem in all ways, this did have the institutional impact of reducing critical mass. Perhaps more importantly, it reduced the interdisciplinary connections that the area studies field could bring, and has slowed the development of research on themes like the cultural implications of European integration, media and the public sphere in Europe,



and the relation between economic globalization and changes in European business institutions.

After 1989, Europe became all the more interesting. The pace of European unification heated up, driven partly by economic globalization. Expansion of the EU raised important questions not only about its structures and economic programs but about what sorts of cultural or political prerequisites might be demanded of new members (such as Turkey as well as East European countries). These were not unrelated to questions about whether the EU was either based on or meant to produce a common European culture. The end of the Cold War raised questions about the North Atlantic alliance and the crisis of Yugoslavia about whether Europe was capable of a common defense or foreign policy. New levels of immigration and the prominence of young citizens of visibly non-European ancestry raised questions about citizenship. So did attempts to reduce public expenditures by dismantling welfare states or reducing specific sorts of benefits and subsidies. When these affected media, arts, or higher education they struck at themes close to the production of the idea of Europe itself. However, even when they were mainly responses to demographic shifts such as the aging of Europe or to challenges of global economic competition, they raised basic questions about what citizens could expect of a united Europe, and whether the elite-led project of unification might be the occasion for new social struggles.

Despite the range of interesting questions, and their importance in both analytic and practical terms, Europe once again had an uncertain place in the area studies vision. After 1989, many erstwhile funders of area studies fields suggested these needed major rethinking. Some simply cut funds, revealing the extent to which, despite disclaimers, their funding had been linked to the Cold War. Others tried to fund transformations. Ironically, the buzzword of the day, 'internationalization', often undermined some of the support for area studies.

One broad agenda was generating more attention to flows across national and regional boundaries, including not only migrations and diasporas but economic and cultural flows as well. An ambiguity in this generally useful move was whether attention to South Asian diasporas, for example, was mainly a task for South Asian specialists or for Europeanists and Americanists. While specialists on both sender and receiver societies engaged in research, the concept of diaspora implied that the central concern was for the now place-transcending cultural group. To the extent such a frame governed thinking, specialists on Europe tended to focus more on questions of institutional adaptation to immigrants and less on the immigrant groups themselves.

Another agenda was trying to better integrate area studies scholarship with disciplinary research. Universities had organized area studies mainly in 'centers' that remained heavily dependent on external funding. While these nurtured interdisciplinary connections, they were in tension with the main



employment system, which was left in the control of disciplinary departments. Some funders complained that though area studies fields had strong links to anthropology and history, they had drifted too far apart from the 'core' social science disciplines of economics, political science, and sociology. Whatever the merits of the charge (or of the implication that this was the fault of the area studies fields more than the disciplines) this fit European Studies less than other fields. What this meant, paradoxically, was that European Studies was not emphasized in programs of remedial funding.

Still a third agenda affected European Studies in a similar way. Funders and others sought to shift emphasis from the training and support of American specialists on foreign areas to the building of stronger social science in various regions of the world, and of ties between US-based specialists on those regions and others in them or indeed around the world. In this approach, funding was commonly conceived as 'remedial' – an effort to build social science where it was weak, which could hardly be said of Europe.

In many regions of the world, there was also new experience of a complication that had long beset European Studies. Globalization and reduction in some old political barriers brought a new wave of collaborative relationships and flows of graduate students between other parts of the world and the US. However, the natives of other regions did not necessarily seek out US specialists on those regions. On the contrary, they often sought to work with American colleagues whose standing was based on theory, research methods, or a non-area-specific field of disciplinary or interdisciplinary knowledge. The area studies fields, in other words, lost some of their centrality to the study of the very areas by which they were defined. And indeed, as noted above, European Studies as an area studies field had never been dominant in US studies of Europe to the extent that, say, South Asian Studies was dominant in US studies of South Asia.

It was at about this time that European Union Studies began to be promoted as a version of European Studies (although defined largely by a funding source and a cluster of policy questions rather than by a deeper and fully intellectual agenda). A variety of European national governments continued to support projects designed to build stronger ties between their own national academics and those of the US. One rationale was to balance new levels of interconnection among European academics of different national backgrounds with continued transatlantic ties (and thus to play the national as well as the regional game). Another was simply to have connections to the largest and strongest academic establishment in the world. However, this was inherently problematic, since the European nations hoped for a symmetrical interest that was seldom forthcoming. There simply were not as many young American researchers interested in ties with German counterparts, say, as *vice versa*. Moreover, the Germans (to continue the example) were not interested simply



in American specialists on Germany, although these most wanted German connections. They wanted their best linked to America's best in each field. This reflected partly the reduced standing of Europe in a world with many more strong international academic communities than in the past, but much more the reduced standing of individual European countries.

Continuing Importance of European Studies

Despite a difficult period and a changed context, European Studies remains important — in itself, certainly, and also for Americans. Indeed, Europe remains one of (if not) the most telling examples of why it is important for social science knowledge to be organized in terms of regions as well as nation-states or smaller localities or on a global scale. The remarkable social experiment of European unification is a central reason for this. Studies of the EU, and of Europe in the era of the EU, need to transcend analyses of particular political decisions and policy regimes to explore the broader processes of social transformation involved. These are crucial instances — natural experiments, if you will, for the study of a host of social phenomena that are not all uniquely European even if the experiments themselves are distinctively European. And yet the experiments are not just 'natural', but chosen. And this is part of their significance. Like the founding of the United States and like many social revolutions, European social change involves an element of active choice. The choice is not perfectly democratic, but part of the European experiment is precisely the development of institutions and norms that give ordinary people considerably more say over the social conditions in which they live than was true in the past or is true in most places. This, certainly, is worthy of study.

There are questions about cultural diversity, migration and citizenship; questions about the relation of legal structures to the character of business institutions; questions about the tension between technocratic administration and social movements; and questions about the relation of cities to metropolitan regions. The transformation of European higher education is a dramatic instance for the study of institutional change; so too are various efforts to achieve common standards and regulations for learned professions. Europe is a good place to ask about the conditions under which artistic creativity flourishes, or does not, and about the preservation of cultural heritage and its harnessing to nationalist or commercial projects. The European labor movement is playing catch-up to capital's capacity to use the expansion of geographic scale as a way of displacing economic power from local agreements that constrained it — and this is a continuation of a story prominent in most European countries in the 19th century. The fate of welfare



states is a question of general interest better studied in Europe than anywhere else. So too is the question of how effectively a shared public sphere can be constructed on an international scale, and how effectively it can promote democracy. And the related question of whether television will resist reduction to the entertainment programming Pierre Bourdieu called ‘cultural fast food’. The project of a European constitution is a project of general theoretical interest as well as specific regional import.

All these themes are important not only for knowing about Europe but also for knowing about the world. Europe simply happens to be the best place to study them, as well as a place of intrinsic interest and significance because of its global power and influence. There is good reason also to ask some more particularistic questions that nonetheless have broader significance. Will Europe attempt to preserve one self-understanding of its identity against change by barring migration or adopting what has been called the posture of ‘Fortress Europe’? Will the new Right continue to expand? And is it really best called that, or is it more a populist expression of discontent that is not deeply ‘right’ or ‘left’ wing but mobilized at the moment more by right wing ideologues? How will European expansion proceed? Who will be let in, and what will the decision say about the character and values of Europe? Will Turkey be excluded to tacitly affirm a self-understanding rooted in the notion of Western Christendom even in an era when Europeans are among the least religious people in the world? And how will the enlarged EU fare? Can it keep up momentum in the intensification of integration or will that stall with expansion of scale? Will Europe further develop a distinctive posture in regard to globalization? Will this reflect the critical sentiments of many European youth? Or the ambitions of European businessmen to be central to a global economy? Will it involve advocacy for humanitarian interventions and assistance from North to South — in which Europe is the world’s leader? How will this play out across the Mediterranean as well as around the world? Will Europe be a moderating influence on or counterweight to the United States when the latter acts as the world’s single superpower? Will Europe play a crucial role in saving the United Nations? Or will the projects of those who favor a clash of civilizations win out in greater unity between Europe and countries forged largely by European settlement, and enmity between them and others?

European intellectual life remains vitally important to Americans, not least because it provides so many crucial interlocutors. This is perhaps first and foremost true in art and culture, but it is also important in political debate, and not least of all in social science. It remains unclear how much European intellectual life will be remade in the image of American; certainly some with influence over state higher education budgets promote aspects of this. If Europe does not continue to nurture a range of different — often specifically



national and sometimes specifically urban — intellectual communities, it may ironically matter less. The diversity of European intellectual and cultural life is a basic source of its importance — and indeed its vitality. European integration need not end this, but specific action may be needed to defend it. At the same time, European intellectual life has been distinctive not only in its quality, but in its organization. The French interdisciplinary cluster, *les sciences humaines*, does not exist in the United States, although in some sense most of its constituents do. European social scientists are often distinguished by greater historical awareness and philosophical training than Americans (although perhaps not greater productivity in empirical research). European social science is also integrated into public discussions of a different sort and in different ways.

This is not the place to advocate one structure against another. Nor is it the place to weigh the virtues of American *vs* European thought, or the extent to which putatively neutral globalization involves the imposition of an American model as many Europeans have claimed. What I think is clear is that Europe matters not just for itself but also for the world. And European Studies matters not only for the particular knowledge of Europe it can produce and transmit, but for the bearing of that knowledge on pressing questions for the world as a whole, for other regions in the world, and for innumerable human projects.

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