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Funding Fathers: A Case Study of Networks of American Studies

In 1957, Rockefeller Foundation officer Erskine McKinley wrote the following after a meeting with the Norwegian economist Petter Jakob Bjerve, head of Statistics Norway and soon-to-be Norwegian Minister of Finance:

[P. J. Bjerve] is a fine man. His genious is not that of an H. Wold. Neither, by the way, is his taste in art. HW recommended the Munck [sic] collection at the National Gallery which is truly a national treasure. PJB, on the other hand, never saw it but regards the city hall with esteem. EWM later checked. It’s a real WPA-type horror: Peasant-poster thick ankled gilt-touched vulgarity. Oh well – he is a good economist. But so is Wold! (McKinley)

Credibility and trust is inherently social, also in academic knowledge production. McKinley’s notes on his meeting with Bjerve show two things. Firstly, that taste in art and political astuteness are often conflated; taste has a tendency to be seen as a marker of sufficient cultural intelligence. And secondly, they show the political nature of this kind of social academic network. The Rockefeller Foundation officer clearly did not have much love for what he calls WPA (the New Deal Works Progress Administration) type horrors.

Rockefeller grants were instrumental in the postwar rebuilding, and the postwar restructuring, of European academia. Rockefeller fellowships did not just provide their recipients with knowledge of the latest developments of their field and professional authority; they also both created and were dependent upon international social networks of scholars, foundation officers and state functionaries. Giles Scott-Smith argues that these “state-private networks” of elites in areas as seemingly disparate as the university and intelligence, foreign policy establishments and libraries was a key aspect of the complex process of “Atlanticist” ideological alignment between European and American elites in the immediate postwar period (Scott-Smith The Politics of Apolitical Culture).

In an article from the 1960s where he explored the history and methodological fruitfulness of the American Studies movement, Sigmund Skard, who was the first professor of American literature in Norway and a central figure in the institutionalization of American Studies in Europe, wrote that

The results of the great conflict 1939-45 made it inevitable that the study of the United States and its civilization experienced a further expansion, this time all over the globe. The omnipresence of the Americans, and the impact they made, challenged mankind to try to find out what their civilization was really about. Much of this swiftly accelerating activity in war-devastated countries needed American help. By coincidence of circumstances part of this assistance came to
be closely tied to the ideology of the American Studies movement. And both its strength and its weakness is revealed thereby. (Skard “The American Studies Movement” 33)

The situation for most universities in Europe after WWII was dire. There was little money for books and even less for teaching. It was indeed no coincidence, but circumstances, that led European scholars to seek money from American foundations and the United States Information Service (USIS). It was also not coincidence, but circumstances, that made the Americans want to fund American Studies in Europe. Skard’s phrasing tries to draw a veil of separation between cultural development (the inevitability of the need to find out what the American civilization was really about) and its institutionalization and funding (the assistance that was closely tied to the ideology of the American studies movement). On the other hand, in his implementation of American Studies in Norway, and in his descriptions in his *American Studies in Europe: Its History and Present Organization*, Sigmund Skard was very aware of the importance of institutionalization for the development of knowledge, and it is important to take that insight seriously by looking at what role the institutionalization of the field had in the alignment of European and American elites. As Skard’s quote above shows, the development of this particular field was an important part of what one might call the geopolitics of international knowledge production, and “both its strength and weakness is revealed thereby.”

I.

Discussions of the early history of American Studies in Europe cannot avoid the Cold War dimension of the institutionalization of the field. The John F. Kennedy Institute and the entire Free University of Berlin was liberally funded by state and private actors in the United States both at the founding of the University and throughout the University’s history. The German *American Studies Journal*, published by the Halle-Wittenberg Universität, started its life as the American Newsletter of the *land* of Baden-Württemberg in 1960, consisting of 20 stenciled pages and distributed by the USIS in Stuttgart (Grabbe). The field of American Studies in Europe is a child of WWII and of the Cold War (Gleason; Buell “Theorizing the National; Holzman), but just as interestingly, the interdisciplinary field of American Studies in the U.S. is just as much a child of the trans-Atlantic European-American relationship. David Shumway’s story of how Yale presented their American Studies program as a bulwark against communism in order to win a 500 000 dollar foundation grant is one good example (Buell “Theorizing the National”). Another one is the *American Quarterly*, the journal of the American Studies Association, spending its entire first issue reporting from the first Salzburg Conference of American Studies and on the view of America and impact of American literature in Europe (Curti; Nash Smith; Beloff). This gives this scholarly field a particularly interesting history from a perspective of the geography and
social history of knowledge, and the ways in which institutional academic history intersect with conceptual history of ideas. American Studies is institutionalized literature research halfway between the concept of the “Great American Novel” and postwar international relations.

Georg Henrik von Wright once wrote that the institution of the University has two different masters to serve. “Scholarship is one if them. Power, in a wide sense of the word, is the other” (von Wright 9). Even in less overtly political fields of study than ‘American Studies’, debates over science are fundamentally political debates. However, the field of American Studies in Europe lends itself particularly well to explorations of the ways in which knowledge and power intersect in academia, seeing as the field was institutionalized in Europe as part of an attempt to “modernize” European culture out of fascism. The field is interesting from this perspective because of its overtly political nature. The spread of interdisciplinarity was a stated goal in the institutionalization of American Studies in Europe in the postwar era, as insular disciplinary traditions (particularly in Germany) were seen as one of the situations that made it possible for instance for German universities and German knowledge production to be complicit in atrocities during the war. Sigmund Skard’s description of the rise of American Studies in Germany in particular is a progressive narrative of importance of American ideas to dispel German conservatism (Skard American Studies in Europe esp. ch. IV: Germany). Former president of the British Association of American Studies Harry Allen wrote in 1980 that “In a fearful sense, Hitler made Americanists of us all...” (Allen 6).

Donatella Izzo argues that Italian American Studies has always been politically charged. During WWII, Italian Americanists used America as an image of a democratic heterotopia to destabilize fascist politics. Intellectuals used the myth of America to counteract fascism. America was seen as positively barbarous and positively barbarous. This was American Exceptionalism, but not of the American variety. Italians created an American Exceptionalism of their own through their choice of texts to represent America. Cesare Pavese “was a passionate translator of Melville, and a competent and appreciative critic of Sinclair Lewis, Sherwood Anderson, Edgar Lee Masters, John Dos Passos, Walt Whitman, William Faulkner, and Richard Wright, but never even mentioned, say, Henry James: his America was robustly democratic, physical, committed to the celebration of the language and experience of the man in the street – everything that Italy under fascism was not” (Izzo 590). According to Izzo, “American Studies in Italy ... started as a politically progressive pursuit committed to change in both society and literary taste, and was resisted by those who were more steeped in nationalistic notions of the superiority of European civilization” (Izzo 591). The situation in Sigmund Skard’s Norway was somewhat different. For Skard, the politically progressive pursuit took the guise of nationalism, and he found this in the American tradition. One could make a convincing argument that this difference has to do with Italy and Norway’s different experiences during the war. For the left

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1 My translation from the Swedish.
progressives in Italy, the nationalist tradition was as bankrupt as Sigmund Skard claimed the German academic tradition to be, whereas in Norway the occupation and the exile government opened up for a narrative of nationalist progressive democracy.

In so much of the literature, the field of American Studies was and is described as a movement. This moniker, too, points to political, ideological and scholarly considerations converging in a sense that this particular field was necessary for the development of western culture as well as western academia. One of these ideas was that it was considered about time that American literature was taught and studied separately, as an expression of American culture (Skard The Study of American Literature), or, in the jargon of the time, an expression of the American Mind (Commager). However, it also points to a sense of political idealism in the movement itself. A well-known story is the one Leo Marx tells of a young American Fulbright scholar in England, trying to explain American Studies to Richard Hoggart, founder of the Birmingham School of Cultural Studies, and exclaiming: “But you don’t understand, I believe in America!” (Marx 399-400).

This political project was not monolithic, of course. Within any field, there are power struggles between central and more marginalized groups. In American Studies internationally, the fault lines have been many. The uneven interdependencies of American Studies in Europe and the U.S., as well as the specific historical moment of institutionalization of American Studies in post-war Europe, lead to interesting disturbances in the force field of power structures of the relational geography of interdisciplinary American Studies. Some of these I have explored in my PhD dissertation When I Think of America at Night, No More Sleep for Me: Sigmund Skard’s American Studies Between Hegemons (2013), the title of which plays upon the fact that Skard, when wanting to describe his ambivalent relationship to his object of study, the U.S., turned to quoting a German poet, Heinrich Heine, talking about Germany. The story of the beginning of American Studies in Norway is the story of Norway’s move from a German to an American academic sphere of influence, with all the realignment this entails.

The complex intersections between directions of teaching and research and the structures of the academic public sphere, the incentive structures and the networks of scholars that were built in the postwar world, need analysis. Within which and through which (social, academic, state-private,) networks academic knowledge is being produced and in within which and through which networks the producers of knowledge are being produced is important to understand the growth of our field. In this article I am looking at some of these relationships and the maneuvering towards ideological alignment between Norway and the U.S. and Europe and the U.S. through the institutionalization of American Studies in Europe. I want to shed light on this through Skard, who was the first professor of American literature in Norway but also a founding board member of the European Association
of American Studies (EAAS), and the author of the book that has been referred to by almost everyone writing on American Studies in Europe, namely *American Studies in Europe: Their History and Present Organization* (1958).

Recent writers on the academic field of American studies have pointed out that the early American Studies scholars, when looking for “the American Mind,” very easily could imagine that there was such a thing, because the environment in which they worked and moved was quite homogeneous; a small and uniform milieu (Buell “The Timeliness of Place”). In his biography of Shepard Stone, *America and the Intellectual Cold Wars in Europe: Shepard Stone between Philanthropy, Academy, and Diplomacy*, Volker Berghahn emphasizes the social networks of Stone as imperative to the development of European-American relations in the post-war period, and hopes that his book will further stimulate research into the importance of social networks in the “sociology of ...European-American relations” (Berghahn 59). In the late 1960s the close working relationships of what Giles Scott-Smith calls “state-private networks” were read as this generation either conspiring with or being duped by American intelligence forces, in particular the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). The Ramparts magazine’s exposure of the CIA backing of Cultural Cold War efforts in 1967 fed this interpretation, which became a large part of the generational conflict in the humanities in the late 1960s and early 1970s in general, and in American Studies. In his article on the history of the European Association of American Studies (EAAS), Hans Bungert points out that EAAS Secretary General Arie den Hollander was worried that young people in Europe were less than thrilled at the importing of American culture to Europe through the universities. In fact, as Bungert points out, “the 1968 generation had traumatic effects on Committee members for several years. Den Hollander’s experience at the University of Amsterdam led him to the conclusion that radical Dutch students saw the EAAS as part of the CIA” (Bungert 130). This interpretation has been strengthened by stories of the Cultural Cold War such as Frances Stonor Saunders’s book *Who Paid the Piper?: The CIA and the Cultural Cold War* from 2000 (Saunders). However, lately others, such as Hugh Wilford in *The Mighty Wurlitzer: How the CIA Played America*, has argued that the secret funding of magazines, labor unions, did not necessarily get the CIA what they wanted (Wilford). Bungert’s article, from 1994, states from the outset that the EAAS has always been completely independent of American government money. To him, Skard’s book *American Studies in Europe* proves that the field in Europe was “not exported from the United States to Europe after the Second World War, for it was already there.” Bungert writes that Skard’s book is proof that American Studies in Europe was and is “a purely intra-European event, independent of any American influence” (Bungert 126).

Skard’s example shows that the Atlanticist realignment of European elites, also in the University in Western and Northern Europe after WWII, was indeed highly dependent on a strong American push for influence, but it was not a conspiracy. It didn’t have to be.
II.

The institutionalization of academic knowledge production has important structuring effects on the knowledge produced. Institutionalization makes physical certain and not other relationships. Through organization into offices and classrooms, break rooms and shared printers, institutionalization creates working environments that are conducive to certain and not other forms and directions of research and collaboration, both by physical manifestations and by what Pierre Bourdieu calls “the performative magic of the social” (Bourdieu *The Logic of Practice* 57). The physical spaces in which scholarly knowledge production happens, shape the reproduction of the scholarly environment. As David Livingstone says, “It is also within these spaces that students are socialized into their respective scientific communities. Here they learn the questions to be asked, the appropriate methods of tackling problems, and the accepted codes of interpretation” (Livingstone 18). In the *Logic of Practice*, Bourdieu argues that knowledge is constructed through institutions and embodied structurations that are both the products of and the producers of history. The actor in history is limited in her choices to the practical possibilities and the social possibilities of the situation and the institution in which she finds herself.

Institutionalization in the university involves both the creation of physical spaces, and the organization of teaching disciplines and their relationship to research disciplines. Theories develop through academic practice, and so the institutionalization of scholarly fields both in a physical sense and in the structures of the university is important both for the conceptual development within these fields and for the exploration of this conceptual development. Looking at practice is necessary to learn how American Studies has made itself distinct from other neighboring fields (Bauerlein) as well as what the categories used are being used for (Fluck). Heinz Ickstadt has argued that the fight against vested interests in the traditional English and history disciplines was a contributing factor to the defining of an American Studies identity (Ickstadt), and the way American Studies has done this is by insisting on its interdisciplinarity. The institutionalization and funding structures, and networks of the historical beginnings of American Studies in Europe has produced a very specific set of interdisciplinarities within the field – one which often is at odds with the version of interdisciplinarity of the U.S. field of American Studies. At the same time, however, U.S. journals, organizations and conferences were and are the center to a European periphery with regards to prestige and methodological innovation. As Liam Kennedy has written, America has at once been the object of study and the object of desire for many European Americanists (Kennedy). Indeed the field of American Studies and the interdisciplinarities of American Studies can mainly be defined through the historical structurations of the field itself, and how the “relational geography” (Hones and Leyda) is manifested in institutional structure and in the work of the scholars in that field. The delimitation of the movement and the field resists an analytical approach, and are
as such better defined historically. Scholarship is at once both transnational and inter-national, and the so-called internationalization of academia has its own specific political consequences for the creation of cores and peripheries and semi-peripheries not just of an economic world order (Wallerstein) or of literature (Moretti) but of a world order of knowledge production. The academic field of American Studies in Europe is thus both a part of and a reaction to a postwar reorganization of the academic and economic and literary world-system.

Sigmund Skard was very aware of the impact of institutionalization on research. His own book *American Studies in Europe: Their History and Present Organization*, published in two volumes in 1958 and created with help from a travel grant from the Rockefeller Foundation, was written as a response to a conflict over syllabi and teaching at home in Oslo, as an attempt to create a tradition for American Studies, and places great emphasis on institutionalization. He argues that in the mid-20th century, there was a “veritable invasion of Europe by American civilization” (Skard *American Studies in Europe* 39), and the universities could not be left to their own discretion when it comes to American Studies. “It was recognized more and more generally that the beginnings of American Studies made before the war were inadequate, and that their development could no longer be left to chance” (Skard *American Studies in Europe* 40). Skard’s story of American Studies in Europe is a political story about universities and a story of the politics of universities. American Studies is part of this story as “involved in the battle” between conservative and liberal forces in the university systems in Europe (Skard *American Studies in Europe* 30). And the battle is fought with institutional means.

In his book on the institutionalization of scientific practices, Timothy Lenoir explains maneuvering within institutional constraints with an analogy to a virtual reality world within the cyberpunk novel *Snow Crash* by Neal Stephenson. There are walls and obstacles that the “players” have to take into account. These are programmed into the world, and which limit the kinds of movements their avatars can make, even within a world that is technically not real. However, a good player has both acquired through practice embodied skill at swooshing around these walls and obstacles on her or his motorcycle, and has, through practice, discovered which obstacles are truly impenetrable, and which it is possible to penetrate with her sword, for instance, if not with her body. Lenoir uses this as an example of how the worlds of institutions work (Lenoir). Good “players” know which rules are impenetrable, which you can bend, and which you can break with impunity. They have also embodied skill at maneuvering the obstacles of funding committees, institute boards and quality commissions. It helps to have the same background as the ones who have built the roads and walls.

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2 For instance, the much discussed so-called crisis in the humanities can be framed as partly a result of the internationalization of academic funding structures, often in the image of the natural sciences and with the institutionalization and cooperation patterns of the natural sciences in mind.
In the total war environment of WWII and the immediate postwar period, moving into the Cold War, people moved between the different worlds. Sigmund Skard was subject specialist in Norwegian at the American Library of Congress, then specialist for the Nordic Countries at the Office of War Information (OWI), before becoming Professor of American Literature at the University of Oslo. Both Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead did work for OWI, Benedict full time and Mead on a project basis (Gleason 356). Tom Braden, first chief of the CIA’s International Organizations Division, was also executive secretary for the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in the late 1940s. John Hay Whitney of the Whitney Museum was a former agent of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) and sat on President Truman’s Psychological Strategy Board. Nelson Rockefeller, another intelligence alumnus, who called abstract expressionism “free enterprise painting,” was in a position to fund hundreds upon hundreds of young academics to study the new social sciences and other subjects in the United States. (Rockefeller quoted in Wilford 107). Shepard Stone, head of the Ford Foundation’s international division, was first an American graduate student in Germany, thereafter a journalist in the U.S., then responsible for the approval of new press in the American occupation zone in Germany, then a journalist again, then Director of Public Affairs for Occupied Germany, then Director of International Affairs in the Ford Foundation, then President of the anti-communist organ the International Association of Cultural Freedom before becoming Director of the Aspen Institute in Berlin (Berghahn). These networks were also tangential with, and more importantly, important for, the wider literary world outside of the University. Norman Holmes Pearson, head of European operations for OSS’ counter-intelligence wing X-2 and later institutional father of American Studies at Yale, was an important figure in developing an American literary world from the 1930s on, “working on anthologies, socializing with everyone from the Sitwells to Gertrude Stein, writing introductions and letters of introduction, finding publishers, arranging lectures and readings” (Holzman 73).

The academic social networks so important for this movement – what Giles Scott-Smith calls state-private networks – was instrumental in the development of American Studies in Europe. Inderjeet Parmar argues that this kind of elite networking was also important in the rise of American economic and political power in the 20th century, that the work of the academic foundations were, in fact, the foundation upon which the so-called American century was built. He also stresses that the philanthropic foundations operated on a particular principle of efficiency and business logic which, through the work of these foundations, infused most philanthropic work in the 20th century and also many of the institutions with which the philanthropic foundations swapped personnel: the intelligence community, the UN, government

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3 The OSS was the war-time military predecessor of the CIA run by William Donovan. Holmes Pearson’s position in X-2 incidentally resulted in him being the American representative at the liberation of Norway in May 1945.
structures, and the university. Parmar describes this elite as a loose group he calls the Establishment, who “share assumptions so deep that they do not need to be articulated…” (Geoffrey Hodgson quoted in Parmar 17).

One of the assumptions shared was that international and especially European resistance to American leadership was a result of old-fashioned ideas, which could be dispelled by exposure to American education, American literature and fresh air. Others assumptions were the value neutral nature of the work they were doing, and a pragmatist approach to the problems at hand. “The fundamental instinct of the Establishment was for the political center ‘between the yahoos of the Right and the impracticalities of the Left’” (Parmar 17).

The Norwegian university historian Fredrik Thue stresses that the susceptibility of different scholarly cultures to the leadership and influence of American scholarship after WWII was not solely determined by the amount of pressure and funding from the United States, but also by the institutional structures and the cultural orientations of local academic elites. Norway was particularly susceptible to influence from the United States because of a pre-existing cultural affinity between American and Norwegian academic elites (Thue). Norwegian, like Italian, radicals during the war, looked to the United States for support and for intellectual inspiration. This postwar development was not so much a break with an isolated European academic tradition, as part of a series of exchanges. The Americanization of postwar social science and humanities scholarship was grounded upon two interrelated ideas—that all scholarship follows the same trajectory, and that the humanities and social sciences were in some way underdeveloped. American Exceptionalism and scientific progress here went hand in hand, and American intellectual leadership was seen as an antidote to totalitarianism. Academia was central in the re-orientation effort. But these innovations were never a wholesale adaptation of American models. They were, according to Thue, a strategic adaptation through bargaining with the social environment.

Sylvia Hilton and Cornelis van Minnen argue that “The aims and strategies of U.S. diplomacy after 1945 were born out of the belief that the Cold War must be fought on all fronts, but that each front had its own characteristics and imposed its own rules” (Hilton and van Minnen 17). Totalitarianism, in this case communism, was to be overcome by generosity and superior weapons of persuasion and by showing that America had cultural values worthy of a world leader. This is, according to Hilton and van Minnen, the reason why U.S. public policy became more interested in academia and culture. The idea behind the promotion of American Studies in Europe was to show that there was cultural as well as economic leadership in the States. Yet still, in their article, they quote Skard from both American Studies in Europe and from the American Myth and the European Mind that the decisive interest in the study of America in Europe is the European interest, posited against an American interest.

I want to argue that neither the “European interest” nor the “American interest” are monolithic coherent phenomena, but that there are other interests that are more conducive to analysis. I think this situation, though described
using different conceptual language by Hilton and Van Minnen, Parmar and Thue (and as we shall see later also Scott-Smith and Helge Danielsen) can be fruitfully explored using the concepts of practice and *habitus* by Pierre Bourdieu. Parmar’s Establishment mentality is very close to what Bourdieu describes as the *habitus* of the academic elite. In Bourdieu’ conception this *habitus* of the builder of institutions is structured both by his past and through the present situation, and thereby reproduced. Genre conventions determine what is considered sensible, what is thinkable and what is unthinkable within the world that you are maneuvering within, whether this is an institutional world or a loose social network. Bourdieu talks about the physiognomy of a social milieu. One can also talk about its geography using the same terms: the horizons that are closed, the places that are inaccessible, the careers that are closed and therefore unthinkable. Important to this discourse is the thinkable and unthinkable, the sensible and not sensible, the natural and unnatural, and how these categories are reproduced.

**Bourdieu’s *habitus* is a disposition that grows out of particular situations.** The practical situation we find ourselves in requires action, and this action can take one of a set of different forms, but it cannot take any form. Bourdieu mentions the board meeting, the speech at the commensurate ceremony, and the exam. I want to add the interview for funding, such as the interview that Petter Jakob Bjerve had with the Rockefeller Foundation officer Erskine McKinley, and the many interviews and meetings that that Sigmund Skard had with USIS, Rockefeller, and Ford. One can also add the funding proposal, such as the ones sent to Ford and Rockefeller by the EAAS, or the newspaper opinion piece answering someone else’s claims of complicity in American secret intelligence work. These, and even smaller institutionalized situations require immediate action, which is governed by acquired disposition, by *habitus*. Bourdieu explicates it well by pointing to the situation of the virtuoso instrument player or the virtuoso speaker. Speech genres, literary tools, etc are available to the virtuoso to ply her craft. But these genres and tools are also at the same time constricting of what she can do (Bourdieu “Strukturer” 61; Bourdieu *The Logic of Practice* 57).

As an example, the Norwegian historian Geir Lundestad argues that Skard’s 1985 book *American Studies in Europe* contained several “ideological parts,” like Skard’s insistence in that book that the threat of the Soviet Union “forced the Western nations to close their ranks under American leadership” (Skard *American Studies in Europe* quoted in Lundestad 77) but that Skard’s year in the United States in 1957-58 made him change his attitude so that the when the book “was published in a revised and abbreviated form in 1961 as *The American Myth and the European Mind* most of the more stridently ideological passages had been removed” (Lundestad 77). I believe that a more fruitful way of looking at this shift is not so much as a change in attitude, but in terms of practice, as a change in audience, as well as a change in function. The former book was, as Skard has written elsewhere, written to create a tradition for American studies in Europe. The latter abbreviated version was a collection of lectures Skard gave on the topic in the United States while he
was there – written to explain European American Studies to an American academic audience. The “more stridently ideological parts” would have sounded out of tune.

_Habitus_ is a harmonizing of common experience, of the spaces of institutionalization, but also common experience of larger outside historical forces. Bourdieu calls the merging of horizons within the class or group through the _habitus_-creating practice “playing in concert without a conductor” (Bourdieu “Strukturer” 64). This image really brings out the necessity that is contained in the _habitus_ concept. Since we are all in this together, as the player (this time of an instrument rather than a computer game) I have to make sure that I am in tune with the rest of the orchestra, so that we can accomplish this task that is before us. When two separate elites are going to merge, there has to be a certain amount of negotiation between horizons, open and closed, and some tunes _will be_ out of tune.

III.

Like the others in his network, Skard acquired his Establishment _habitus_ through the watershed experience of WWII. At the time of the German invasion of Norway in 1940, Skard had already had experience with the new fascist movements in Europe, having been in Munich during the _Kristallnacht_ in 1938, and interviewed German scholars about the regime. He increasingly spoke about the dangers of the German cultural development, and having moved to Sweden shortly after his wife Åse Gruda Skard (who, as the daughter of the Norwegian exile government Foreign Minister, was recommended to stay in Sweden, where she was currently working), he spent his time writing against the German Nazi regime and the Norwegian fascist collaborators.

Through the contacts of his wife, and her father Halvdan Koht, in Oslo and Washington, a scholarship from the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) to work at the Library of Congress as part of a group of “displaced scholars” was made available for Skard. Through contacts in Stockholm and London and at the American and Russian embassies, they were also able to the secure money and visas that made it possible to take the three-month journey through Russia and Japan to the United States, where they spent the next 5 years.

In Washington they were joined in 1941 by Koht, who had been pushed out of the exile government in London. Skard worked for Head Librarian Archibald MacLeish at the Library of Congress for the first two years, and both he and his wife both wrote and travelled extensively giving speeches on behalf of the Norwegian war effort, in person and on local radio stations, to women’s clubs, Veteran Societies and Norwegian American Communities. According to a letter Skard sent to the Rector of the University of Oslo in

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4 My translation from the Norwegian.

5 His notes from these interviews are in the Norwegian National Library’s collection of Skard’s papers, but unfortunately they are written in code.
June 1945, Skard estimated that the two together gave about 600 lectures in the United States over the course of the period (Skard Letter to Didrik Arup Seip, June 18., 1945). Working at the Library of Congress, Skard immediately became part of the world of academic intelligence, in that MacLeish had promised “Wild Bill” Donovan, the head of the OSS, the use of any of his scholars for the war effort (Waller 73). While he was there, Skard also got the Office for War Information (OWI) to procure one hundred scholarships for Norwegians who wanted to study in the United States (Skard Norsk Utefront). After the first two years, Skard’s ACLS funding was discontinued and he became Chief Regional Specialist for Norway at the OWI, where he was in charge of procuring information about the situation in Norway for use for the printed and radio propaganda material. In the very last part of the war, he also gave speeches on OWI radio broadcasts to Norway himself, among other things a reportage on the funeral of Franklin Roosevelt and a book review of Vidkun Quisling’s autobiography (not a very positive one), and worked on a report for use for the American intelligence service in Norway after the war. Skard wrote in his autobiography Solregn that during his time in the OWI he struggled with meddling opposition and media standing in the way of important work.

As an example: my own office at the OWI was for two months given highly confidential excerpts of all Norwegian letters that had gone through American censorship, a valuable contribution to our purpose. (It happened once in a while that I had to hide a smile, as when my father-in-law happily showed me a letter that had been smuggled out of Norway, and I had read it long ago in my office.) That pipeline was abruptly severed when a busybody congressman pulled the issue out into the public sphere (Skard Solregn 166).

After the end of the war, Skard was heavily involved in the work of rebuilding and the reorientation of the humanities in Norway, through his work on collecting a bibliography of the most important scholarship in the United States during the war years for dissemination among Norwegian research libraries, and also through procuring large shipments of duplicate books given away by American libraries to the war-decimated libraries of Europe. Skard had written to several agencies and Norwegian officials that he believed it was very important to create American Studies at the University of Oslo as part of the effort to help Norwegians be more positive towards the United States. Both of them worked to get American organizations to pay for Norwegian students to come to America (Skard Norsk Utefront).

Gruda Skard worked as psychologist for American children, and was in the last years of the war involved in the cultural organization that was to become UNESCO, and on the basis of this was sent as one of the Norwegian delegates to the inaugural San Francisco conference of the United Nations.

"Som eit døme: mitt eige kontor i OWI fekk i to månader høgkonfidensielle utdrag av alle norske brev som hadde gått gjennom amerikansk sensur, eit verdifullt tilfang for vårt føremål. (Det hende stundom eg laut smila i i sjøget, som når verfar min lukkeleg syntse meg eit brev som var smugla ut av Norge, og eg hadde lese det for lenge sidan på kontoret mitt.) Den leidninga heim vart brått skoren av då ein geskjeftig kongressmann drog saka fram offentleg."
The Rockefeller Foundation was specifically interested in three areas of the Humanities at the University of Oslo in 1946: The efforts of philosopher Arne Næss and his students to create an instrumentalizable philosophy of peace, efforts to modernize the administration of the University, and the American Institute of Sigmund Skard. The requests from the University of Oslo for funds to send the students of Næss, and Halvorsen and Skard to the States for different periods of time are, according to John Marshall, even more justified than might be the case in other countries; Norway is small, the University of Oslo was the only university, and there was a strong connection between university academics and other sectors of public life (Marshall).

Sigmund Skard’s position as professor of American literature initially was part of an early optimism on Norway’s part, wanting to be in the position to mediate between the two new superpowers that had emerged out of WWII. These two new superpowers were described by Skard, quoting the Norwegian poet Wergeland, as two tall mountains casting their shadows of influence over Europe – the two pyramidal shadows reaching each other in the middle, eclipsing the sun over the European plateau.

In 1835 Henrik Wergeland wrote in a Norwegian newspaper, ‘The shadow of America’s grandeur already stretches across the ocean and deep into our hemisphere and meets in Germany, which is thus buried in the vilest darkness, the shadow of Russia’s pyramid.’ In these words, written more than one hundred years ago, Wergeland has characterized with the foresight of genius the world in which we are living today and the position of the United States in it. Even twenty or thirty years ago, it was still possible to regard western Europe as a kind of mountain plateau, where the mountain peaks of course were of very different size, but the difference was not all-important. Today, as you know, western Europe feels itself to be a narrow gorge between two overpowering mountains, the Soviet Union in the East and the United States in the West. And if we are not thrown into the camp of the one, we will unavoidable, by the law of gravitation, veer toward the other (sic). This means that in this world of ours, which we may like or not but we have to live there anyhow, the impact of the United States is increasing tremendously in practically all fields within the whole Western orbit. (Skard American Impacts on Norway 27-28).

As part of being awarded the Rockefeller-funded professorship, Skard was given an additional Rockefeller scholarship to go to the United States for a year to familiarize himself with his new subject. He sat in on classes, interviewed professors and other contacts in the United States, visited old friends and family, and bought books to be shipped home to the Oslo University Library, and what would later become the Institute of American Studies there. While in the United States, he met with Robert Spiller and Kenneth

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8 This effort was intricately tied up with the establishment e.g. of UNESCO, though Næss was deeply frustrated at the inertia of working within the U.N. system.
9 The manuscript from which this quote is taken is undated, but the same quote from Wergeland is used and discussed, in much the same phrasing, though in Norwegian, in the first chapter of Skard’s 1949 book Amerikanske Problem. See Sigmund Skard, Amerikanske Problem, Edv. Normanns Legats Skrifter (Trondheim: F. Bruns Bokhandels forlag, 1949) 9.
Murdock, but also Robert Frost, Norman Holmes Pearson and Bryn Hovde, Dean of the New School of Social Research, and through him, W. H. Auden and Henry Wallace and Eleanor Roosevelt, among others. He spent three months at the University of Minnesota, one at Harvard, one in Philadelphia, and visited 15 other universities.

Skard himself was highly active in the process to procure the funds from the Rockefeller Foundation. In a letter to David Stephens, one of his contacts at the foundation at the time, and again during a meeting with Stephens, he asked for money for the 1946 study trip to the U.S. arguing that “the spirit of the American college is one of the most valuable Americana to take home to a country where the German Geist has been strong in university life.” (Skard Letter to David Stevens, Oct. 12, 1945) He points to the fact that many Americans, too, see this establishment of a chair in American literature in Norway to be important. He mentions Waldo Leland and Robert Spiller as well as H. A. Moe of the Guggenheim Foundation and says “I need not repeat to you my conversations with these men; the main point is of course that the establishment of the first chair in a field of American culture at the University of Oslo (probably the first chair of its kind in all of Scandinavia) is not exclusively of interest to the Norwegians” (Skard Letter to David Stevens, Oct. 12., 1945).

Later, after he was established in his Chair at the University of Oslo, Skard gave the reason for the creation of his book American Studies in Europe thus in his application for Fulbright money to conduct a trip to supplement his written material with interviews and contacts:

The most immediate usefulness of the book will pertain to the further organization of American Studies in Europe. Such work is now being carried on almost everywhere, but without the slightest coordination; several of my colleagues in various countries have expressed how much they look forward to a survey of what is being done elsewhere. But the investigation also proves to give interesting results from a more general point of view: it shows the baffling difference between the various parts of Europe, as far as American studies are concerned. It may therefore prove to be a useful tool in the more long range planning of American educational work in Europe (Skard Copy of Letter to Dr. Nordstrand).

Skard is also fairly straightforward in letters about the usefulness of American studies for the American government in Europe. He argues that it does not “need to be explained in detail, that the book in question, when finished, will directly serve the purpose of the U.S. Educational Foundation, and be of immediate use to its work, not only in Norway, but all over Europe, and also will be welcomed by other foundations and agencies in the field of research and information” (Skard Copy of Letter to Dr. Nordstrand). In a letter to Edward D’Arms in March 1953, he writes that his study trip to Germany has been particularly useful because Germany is “the real testing ground of American studies just now” (Skard Excerpt from Letter Sigmund Skard to EFD [Edward F. D’Arms], March 16).
When Skard describes what he sees as the necessary remedies to fight ingrained anti-American prejudice in European academia, he is very much on the same page as both the Rockefeller Foundation officers and USIS. Bring the people who will later be in important positions to America and give them an American education, and make sure that the people hired have some American experience. Skard thus tried to use the Rockefeller Foundation and the network he had there to create an English department where American Studies would be an integrated and natural part by making sure that the successor in the chair of English philology would have an American background. The chairs in English Literature and English philology would be vacated in 1954 and 1957, and Skard writes, “I think it is extremely important even to the development of American studies here that these chairs be then filled by the scholars who have studied in the States and understand its importance” (Skard Letter to John Marshall, June 19, 1951). He tried to make sure of this by telling the Rockefeller Foundation who might be eligible and when would be the best time to bring them to America.

In American Studies in Europe, he writes that American studies is important because it will reorient European culture, and because the theoretical and cultural integration that Skard finds in American Studies as a field fits very well with his own concerns about theoretical and “cold” scholarship in Europe.

Even in the Old World there had long been a growing concern about the over-specialization, the lack of social commitment and contact with life in European schools and universities; many Europeans felt these shortcomings to be one of the reasons for the European disaster. Such ideas found expression in many countries in movements for the establishment of a studium generale in the universities. American authorities were in agreement with these efforts (Skard American Studies in Europe 41).

Skard hopes the book can further the growth of American studies “and in doing so serve that international cooperation to which the book by its origin is a living testimony” (Skard American Studies in Europe 13).

IV.

In his article “Laying the Foundations: U.S. Public Diplomacy and the Promotion of American Studies in Europe,” Giles Scott-Smith shows just how important American Studies in Europe was seen to be by officials in the United States, based on letters between the United States Information Service (USIS) stations and country assessment reports of the State Department. He quotes the USIS Paris office from 1963, to say that they are “convinced that the French will never fully understand our policies, much less approve them, without a great appreciation of our history, literature, social, economic, and political systems.” The office is convinced that this will take time and sustained (financial) effort, and that “one of the most logical means to sustain it is the promotion of ‘American Studies’ in the 19 universities throughout
France” (USIS Paris to Department of State, Aug 1963, quoted in Scott-Smith “Laying the Foundations” 47). Scott-Smith argues that the establishment of American Studies in European higher education was predicated on this particular interest from the American State Department. He shows that American government agencies provided both assistance and encouragement, which had as its aim to secure a permanent place for the field institutionally in Europe. This approach to public diplomacy was seen as particularly useful for cooperation between public and private initiatives, like the Rockefeller and the Ford Foundations. As Scott-Smith says, “There are risks involved … , since the government has to grant the private agencies the freedom to act as they see fit. However, the advantages are greater. The government remains in the background, thus distancing the public diplomacy from any direct association with foreign policy goals and giving it extra credibility” (Scott-Smith “Laying the Foundations” 48). The government and the foundations – the public and the private agencies – had overlapping, but not necessarily the same, goals. As Parmar has also shown, the large foundations’ work was “grounded in the conviction that American technocratic efficiency and progressive socio-economic modernization needed to be exported for the general good,” whereas the State Department had more short-term goals in mind. However, their interests and efforts did “coalesce around the belief that the promotion of American Studies abroad was of paramount importance as a means to legitimize U.S. political and cultural leadership” (Scott-Smith “Laying the Foundations” 49). This was achieved through the “deliberate fostering of local elites” who could then “act as guides and interpreters of American culture within their own national communities” (Scott-Smith “Laying the Foundations” 51).

According to Scott-Smith, Sigmund Skard, who he, based on American Studies in Europe and letters found in State Department archives, calls “an avid Atlanticist,” as well as “a pivotal figure in developing this transnational network in Western Europe,” “recognized exactly what was going on” (Scott-Smith “Laying the Foundations” 53, 52) To show this, he quotes Skard’s 1958 book, and highlights that Skard writes that the development of American Studies “could no longer be left to chance…If this movement is compared to that following the First World War, it is not only much more general, it has the support of American institutions on a much larger scale” (Skard quoted in Scott-Smith “Laying the Foundations” 52-53).

Scott-Smith has also argued that in the Netherlands, the focus of the State Department, the United States Information Agency (USIA) and other state agencies involved in public diplomacy and cultural cold war efforts, was on the comparatively slow methods of leader and academic exchange and academic promotion of American studies, because of the high literacy and small public sphere of the country. In an article on American public diplomacy efforts in Norway in 1950-1965 tellingly called Making Friends at Court, Helge Danielsen argues that the same case can be made for Norway.

10 Italics are Scott-Smith’s.
Danielsen points out that Norway’s geopolitical position, neutrality before WWII and influence on other Nordic countries made it an important country for the United States. This led to a separate bi-lateral relationship between the United States and Norway, “an alliance within the [NATO] alliance” (Danielsen 181). The U.S. Information Service in Norway was fairly small, but its activity and achievements were high. In proportion to its population, Norway was one of the European countries that sent most of its leaders and academics to the United States through exchange programs and fellowships, and the number of grantees was high, also in absolute terms. Only a few countries (the UK, West Germany, France and Italy) were awarded more grantees than Norway. On the other hand, since “Norwegians were also known to resent obvious propaganda” (Danielsen 186), the high literacy rates and the small and easily mapped public sphere of Norway created a main focus on “‘slow’ or ‘indirect’ media” of exchange programs (for union leaders, political figures and academics) and American Studies (Danielsen 183). There was little focus on anti-communist messages, and more on building an image of the U.S. as a responsible leader of the free world.

The interchange of ideas, productions and exhibits on the cultural level in Norway have direct bearing on the attitudes Norwegians develop toward the United States as a world leader. Their respect for and understanding of the United States as a nation worthy of leadership will in the long run depend upon ability of the United States to show evidence of cultural depth in its national life (USIE-Oslo to State Department Jan 11, 1952, quoted in Danielsen 183).

The objective of these programs, in particular the exchange programs like Fulbright, was to let Norwegians, through study in the United States, “adopt the American mentality and methods voluntarily” and to develop “a commitment to the US model of modernisation” (Scott-Smith Networks quoted in Danielsen 191), as well as influence (“modify”) negative impressions of “US trade unions and of US race relations” (Danielsen 192). In this way, local intermediaries were needed to bring across the American messages, it was a kind of “public diplomacy by proxy” (Danielsen 184). Among these important local intermediaries were the participants in foreign leader exchange programs, academic exchange programs like the Fulbright program, the newly created Institute for Social Research, and Sigmund Skard. Scholars and grantees alike were seen to fulfill roles as mediators who could spread the message. Skard was seen as especially important, both because he cooperated with the USIS in Norway and not least because he was influential internationally. His role as a perceived neutral scholar at a respected university was seen to be important by American officials, especially his work on American Studies in Europe. American officials saw the American Institute at the University as vital.

The institute provides exactly the kind of fertile ground where the seeds of American generosity – not to say self-interest – can be best planted with every expectation of a bountiful yield. This is particularly true inasmuch as there is a devoted gardener in attendance, in the person of Professor Sigmund Skard, whose appointment to the fill chair of ‘Literature, especially American’ in 1946 gave the
initial impetus for the founding of the American Institute, for the inclusion of much American literature in the University’s English courses and for making use of American Fulbright professors as visiting lecturers. (Joint USIS-Oslo/Embassy dispatch to USIA/State Department Sept. 28, 1959, quoted in Danielsen 195)

American Studies took a central place in American public diplomacy in Norway. The promotion of American Studies in Norway was praised by American officials as both important and efficient. And they relied on the model of cultivating elite groups as links to the populations of the country in question. Thus American Studies was, in a 1965 report, described as “a cornerstone of US cultural diplomacy in Western Europe” (Annual Report to Congress on the International and Cultural Exchange Program Fiscal Year of 1965, by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, quoted in Danielsen 196). As in other parts of Europe, the exchange programs were meant to transform Norwegian academic organization and scholarship. Interdisciplinary work was meant to foster democracy in academia, in the hope that this would transfer to the larger society. The Norwegian public saw the programs like the Foreign Leader Exchange program as “a form of ‘propaganda’ grants with the objective of ‘selling’ the United States” (Danielsen 190), and the academic programs, among them the institutionalization of American Studies, were considered to be less tainted.

Norway and the Netherlands were indeed among the leading countries in the adoption of American Studies as a field, and Skard and the Dutch scholar Arie den Hollander were both strongly involved in the European Association of American Studies from its creation in 1954 until Skard’s retirement and den Hollander’s death in the early 1970s. These small countries, due to lack of ‘ingrained’ scholarly traditions, and with a common history of occupation and of liberation by western Allies, can be said to have been the source of important mediators of American Studies. Already in 1946, Edward D’Arms justified granting money to the University of Oslo by the fact that humanities scholars in the occupied countries seemed to have been given an additional boost of incentive by the experience of occupation itself. “Whether at home, in exile or even in imprisonment, they saw put in jeopardy everything they valued … Thus humanists in these liberated countries seem now more serious, more aware of their responsibilities as humanists to society and to their students” (D’Arms University of Oslo Grant Proposal).

At the end of the 1960s the Ford Foundation was reviewing its efforts within American Studies in Europe. The general impression was very positive. Howard Swearer wrote in a preliminary report in 1968 that “By all accounts the American Studies Program in Europe has been highly successful. … Thus if our future grants were to be guided solely by good services rendered, American Studies would stand near the top when the prizes are being passed out” (Swearer 2). Later in the report he makes explicit what he means by the success and good services rendered by American Studies in Europe.

The variety of mechanisms to improve knowledge of the U.S. is matched by the mixture of academic, humanistic, cultural and political motives which have inspired them. Although it is impossible to untangle this skein of motives, there is
little doubt that at least initially the political purpose was *primus inter pares*. To say this is in no way to debase the program. [Ford Foundation International Affairs Division] quite rightly regarded American Studies as a means to build a solid foundation of understanding for greater Atlantic political and economic cooperation. … Despite the faint odor of cultural imperialism, it was quite proper given the circumstances to promote American Studies (Swearer 2).

Other motives and “results perhaps not originally intended” were the opening up of humanities, arts and social sciences and thus the erosion of parochialism of European academia and greater internationalization of the world of knowledge. At the same time, Swearer points out that despite the great results, it might soon be time to move on to other projects. Though the Ford Foundation should not terminate funding to American Studies, they will have to cut back, and since the State Department is cutting back, there will be requests for money that cannot be filled. He wanted to move the funding of American Studies in Europe from the Office of International Relations to the Arts and Humanities Division, since most of the money goes to “history, literature and the arts” (Swearer 4). The Office of International Relations could then go back to what they did best, “give priority to fostering: joint research and other cooperation between American and European specialists on more narrowly defined common problems of international relations and industrialized societies; discussions between American and European leaders in various fields through travel and study awards, meetings, conferences and round tables, linkages between European Studies in this country and American Studies in Europe;” and somewhat more surprisingly, considering what he has just said about American Studies in Western Europe, “the development of American Studies in Eastern Europe” (Swearer 6).

**Conclusion**

In a recent Call for Papers for a conference on “Academic Culture and International Relations,” the organizers write that

More often than not national interests and political ideologies have compromised the integrity of the idealized ‘republic of letters’, still, academic culture continues to be perceived as an international, even transnational sphere. It, therefore, presents a unique space for the study of international relations at the intersection of culture, politics and diplomacy (Lerg).

In several texts, Skard alludes to the dilemma of the scholar between scholarship and funding structures. As he writes in his introduction to *American Studies in Europe*, when trying to examine a field of knowledge, one soon discovers that there is theory and then there is praxis.

The gap between regulations and actual practice, between claim and achievement, is always wide in a new field, and no less so when that field has the friendly backing of a great foreign power. American Studies were always the focus of

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11 He also recommended that Ford commissioned a sequel to Skard’s *American Studies in Europe*. 
conflicting interests, and are still controversial. The student of the subject is often entangled in susceptibilities, national, professional, and even personal, which make it hard to distinguish between fiction and fact. (Skard American Studies in Europe 10-11)

However, these admonitions not to take words written to secure funding too seriously, does not stop him from writing words to secure funding himself. I would argue that “national interests and political ideologies” do not “compromise the integrity” of the world republic of letters, they make up one of the foundational pillars on which this republic stands. Therefore I agree wholeheartedly that the small global worlds of literature and academia, in our case of interdisciplinary American Studies, are perfect for studying trans- and international cultural power dynamics. American Studies clearly exemplifies and gives light to the drastic shift in academic hegemony in the West in the postwar era.

Earlier in this article, I quoted from a passage in Skard’s American Studies in Europe, also quoted by Scott-Smith, where he justifies his own book as well and the funding of American Studies in Europe by American agencies by the “veritable invasion of Europe by American civilization” (Skard American Studies in Europe 39), after the war. Skard writes, “It was recognized more and more generally that the beginnings of American Studies made before the war were inadequate, and that their development could no longer be left to chance” (Skard American Studies in Europe 40). Scott-Smith highlights and italicizes the fact that Skard writes that the developments could no longer be left to chance. I want to focus on a different part of the sentence. Skard writes here that “it was recognized,” but he does not write by whom. The lack of agency in this grammatical construction signals Skard’s distancing himself from what he is writing. He is trying to both be the European whose interest the European Association of American Studies (EAAS) is to safeguard, but also maneuver within the constraints of practicalities of what he needs to accomplish here and now. Earlier in the book he has written that though there was nothing “American” per se about the many interwar period “trends of modern technical civilization [which] obviously ran counter to essential values in Western culture,” still, concern over the “Americanization of the World” spread also among “responsible Europeans” (Skard American Studies in Europe 31-32). The term responsible here has very little understandable meaning, as it is used as a stand-in for Skard himself. This continued and almost mantra-like focus on responsibility and sensibleness really does place Skard in Parmar’s Establishment, “between the yahoos on the Right and the impracticalities of the Left.”

Thus we have several versions of “players” here, and several versions of playing. The player in Timothy Lenoir’s description of the virtual reality of institutions has attained embodied skill to maneuver the world in which she finds herself. Bourdieu posits his theory of practice against thinkers who see practices as the mere “playing of scores or the implementation of plans” (Bourdieu The Logic of Practice 52). He describes two more players, the virtuoso, who both has the embodied skill to use but is constricted by the genres
and tools at her disposal, and the player in the orchestra without conductor
who needs to stay attuned to the others around her in order to accomplish
the task at hand. While Frances Stonor Saunders book title *Who Paid the Piper?*
insinuates that the paying for the playing is the important part, despite its
title, Hugh Wilford’s book *The Mighty Wurlitzer: How the CIA Played America*
actually argues against the interpretation that students, intellectuals and la-
bor unions were somehow an instrument that the CIA could play, however
much the CIA would want this to be the case.

According to Hilton and van Minnen, how American Studies academics
have “navigated the different (often contradictory) demands, constrains and
opportunities, arising from their official job descriptions and institutional
affiliations…” creates a picture of academic development, because these de-
mands, constrains and opportunities encourage different opportunisms as
projects adapt to changing circumstances. (Hilton and van Minnen 7). The
strategic adaption through bargaining with the social environment, which is
how Fredrik Thue phrases it, happens within structures that structure what
is considered feasible and sensible and responsible responses. The *habitus*
prefers experiences that fit with its conception of common sense. However,
this is not always possible, and in situations of great upheaval, scholars, as
do all people, “cut their coats according to their cloth” (Bourdieu *The Logic
of Practice* 65). Sigmund Skard’s example shows the important structurations
of practice and of common experiences and common short-term goals. Skard
was famously ambivalent about American cultural influence on Europe and
Norway in particular, and was to a certain degree somewhat of an anti-mod-
ernist. He himself wrote that from the very beginning his “thought-world”
had “its roots in the pre-industrial world” (Skard *Solregn* 268). However, his
practice still made him an important figure in the Atlanticist alignment of
academic elites.

Research into networks can, if done superficially, be accused of playing
a guilt-by-association game. However, Bourdieu’s *habitus* and practice con-
cepts show that association does create common feeling, and the common
fight against “totalitarianism” during the war created an especially powerful
esprit du corps. I began this article with a dichotomy between the writers
who have equated ties to American funding agencies and state agencies to
either being duped by or complicit with shadowy intelligence forces, and
the ones who have been claiming, often citing Skard’s writing, or Skard’s
work institutionalizing the European Association of American Studies, that
American Studies in Europe was a purely European affair, independent of
American influence. Both of these approaches are to a certain degree based
on the premise that American funding precludes European agency. However,
the categories upon which that premise is based, those of ‘European’ and
‘American,’ obscures the common *habitus* of the scholars and functionaries
in question. It is not a matter of whether European scholars took American
money. We know they did. It is not even a question of whether European

12 “Heilt frå barndomen i Laksådalen og oppvoksteren min på Fagerheim hadde tanke-
erda mi feste i den førindustrielle verda.”
scholars took CIA money. The interests of the American State Department, the big Foundations, the CIA and the European scholars of American Studies aligned for a while though a common fight against “totalitarianism” and disciplinary specialization. And their cooperation created further alignment.

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