The aim of this paper is to explain the scientific logic behind Area Studies by providing a historic context. We propose that there is a homothetic relationship between world geo-political order and scientific order in Area Studies. Three hypotheses explain this proposal. By referring to the history of ‘Area Studies’ in France inFernand Braudel’s work, we attempt to show how the structuring of scientific research has corresponded to political and ideological objectives of the post-war period. This historicization leads us to believe that Area Studies established in this context, are the result of the monopolization by the West of the distribution of regional power in the world. From the 90s the emergence of global heavy weights and the acceleration of trade and flows have highlighted the profound transformation of world order. Structuring research in Area Studies is no longer sufficient to fully understand economic, political and cultural realities on a world scale. New categories of players are emerging, such as the BRIC countries. Our second hypothesis is therefore that, from the 90s, there has been a demonopolisation of the distribution of regional power in the world. The third assumption concerns the level of knowledge production: in a context where world order is being transformed, we ask the following question: who produces what in Area Studies ? We discuss two ideas: the decentering of the knowledge production due to the multiplication of scientific institutions from outside the West wishing to communicate their own vision of world order, and the transformation of the kind of knowledge produced, for which we describe a typology.