



From national to global: the transformation of academia

Today, national academic sectors compete worldwide for resources, for attention, and above all, for the best minds, excellent young scientists, and the most promising students. A conversation about the globalization of academia.

A global player based in Budapest and Berlin, with experience in the US, the UK and elsewhere: Professor Wolfgang Reinicke has first-hand experience with the globalization of academia.

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Until recently, academia organized itself through national associations, cultivated national publications, and presented research results to the public in the country's national language. For certain subjects and for certain parts of the world, this is still the case.

No doubt, international contacts and cooperation have always existed, but the global knowledge community has rested on a solid national base for centuries. This national base is now largely eroded. What exactly does it mean when we speak about the globalization of the academic world? Professor Wolfgang Reinicke, President of the Global Public Policy Institute in Berlin, and Founding Dean of the School of Public Policy at Central European University in Budapest, spoke to Prem Lata Gupta about the status quo and about strategies and options for the sciences in an increasingly borderless space.

(Photos: Christian Burkert)

Professor Reinicke, is it possible to draw parallels between processes of globalization in the scientific world, and globalization in economics or politics?

As in politics and economics, there is a globalization of science in the sense of the dissolution of borders and the competition that it brings. The national framework no longer exclusively determines the reputation of a scientist or acts as the center of gravity for publications. Even in a comparably large and therefore more inward-looking country, such as Germany, the European academic marketplace is a decisive frame of reference for many researchers today, while for others, this framework is already the global market with North America and Asia at its center. This applies especially to those segments of science, which have been transnationally oriented for some time – just as was the case in the Humanities before the emergence of the highly industrialized nation-states. Nowadays, in many disciplines, researchers must publish in English in order to have their findings received. Today's top scientists are increasingly mobile – institutions across the globe are competing for the best researchers

and students. They seek to attract, develop and retain excellent young researchers at any career stage. While Asia is trying to catch up fast, leading universities in the U.S. and the U.K. are still principal global magnets for talent.

What is the situation in Europe?

Let's take a look at policies related to science: in Europe – in Germany for example – the academic sector is still nationally organized for the most part, given Germany's federal nature, even regionally or locally. Coordination hardly ever extends across national borders. Despite many EU-funded programs, each country has its own agenda. There is insufficient political reflection and action about how Europe could grow into a global scientific and research center in the 21st century. This would involve more than simply looking to the top universities on the other side of the Atlantic for inspiration. Policy announcements will not create a German Harvard, as the German Federal Ministry of Education seems to have had in mind with the 'German Universities Excellence Initiative'. Why don't we think about pan-European

university clusters, which would then also maintain close links with emerging countries in Asia, Latin America, and Africa? This is the only way European scientists and students can learn to challenge their own perspectives and attitudes, and will experience an urgently-needed exchange of ideas across cultural and systemic boundaries.

When is globalization of benefit to the academic sector?

I would like to illustrate its positive effects with two examples. For starters, you can observe such positive effects here at the Central European University in Budapest very well. CEU is a globally oriented university, accredited in both the U.S. and Europe, with students from all continents. English is the common language, yet there is no dominant nationality. The School of Public Policy, which I am currently building up at CEU, aims to become a laboratory with global reach, where academics, practitioners, and students work on the important policy issues of our time. Secondly, positive effects may also be observed on a concrete project level. Take the case of "Global Norm Evolution," our joint research project, which we launched at the end of 2012 with funding from the "Europe & Global Challenges" initiative of the Volkswagen Foundation (also see info box

on page 9). This research project promotes the challenging of one's own assumptions and the development of a common analytical framework through the collaborative work of scholars from various parts of the world.

Overall, the globalization of the academic sector is leading to evolution of students and scientists alike with more international experience. I am certain that the quality of research findings will improve with this increasing global exchange – especially through exchanges across cultural borders and with the participation of scientists from non-democratic political systems.

What risks might globalization bring to scientific learning? For example, if you look at the poorer regions of the world such as Africa?

One risk is that existing imbalances of power may be reinforced by global scientific competition, leading to the pluralism of knowledge being undermined. So one should see to it that regional and national research traditions and questions do not perish in the Anglo-American mishmash. Meanwhile, many developing countries do not have the power and potential to establish internationally competitive knowledge hubs due to a lack of both financial and human resources as their greatest talents go abroad and have no

Wolfgang Reinicke spends most of his time in Budapest. In Berlin he shares an office with GPPI colleagues, here with Evelyne Pauls.





Wolfgang Reinicke and colleagues of the Global Public Policy Institute (GPPi) in Berlin discuss various aspects of the research project “Global Norm Evolution”.

incentives to return home. Another danger I see lies in the fact that scholars adjust their work and interests to align with dominant opinions, a perceived mainstream, in order to gain access to the established knowledge centers. Once again, there is a threat in Germany that working to catch up with internationally competitive elite universities may lead to an extreme stratification of the higher education landscape – comparable to that of the United States. Then we will end up with an isolated group of well-equipped elite universities, and at the same time a broad mass of universities, which operate at the level of community colleges. More generally, there is a risk that the ideals of freedom of research and teaching will not prevail globally. American universities expanding to Asia or the Persian Gulf already face allegations of self-censorship.

In Berlin this year, the Global Research Council decided on an action plan on the subjects of “Open Access” and “good scientific practice.” Is that a step in the right direction?

First of all, it is good news that there is an initiative such as the Global Research Council. To date, far too little dialogue among national research sponsors is taking place. The fact that the meeting in Berlin has brought forth common standards for “good scientific practice” is an important step towards global

quality assurance of research. I also consider the issue of “Open Access” important. To ensure open access to knowledge is an ideal worth striving for. Thanks to the digital revolution it is one, which is increasingly within reach. However, its implementation raises some, yet unresolved questions – such as sustainable financing models for journal publishers, whose existing business models are threatened by open access.

Universities in the U.S. are generally said to have a close proximity to the industry. Stocks of knowledge, but especially research results are considered a commodity. What do you think about that?

As long as the freedom of research is ensured, I see third party financing of research by industry rather unproblematic – especially when the results are at least partially made available as a public good. It becomes problematic if universities do not receive sufficient core funding from public sources or have no endowment of their own. That would leave them lacking the basis for independent research and teaching, and dependent on sourcing third party funding. In this vein, recent developments in England are worrisome, where the government has massively cut funding to universities in recent years, in particular for teaching.

What skills are required of scientists for them to succeed globally and gain access to international projects? Will the mastery of soft skills increasingly matter besides thematic expertise in the future, especially with regards to self-promotion and marketing one’s own projects and results?

This is not necessarily a new development. The “I pursue research in the ivory tower and do nothing to communicate it” type of academics have always had difficulties remaining at the forefront of their fields, both nationally and globally. That doesn’t mean that some socially rather incompetent personalities have found it impossible to progress in academic careers – quite on the contrary. Far too little attention has been paid to the ability to work in teams and to passion for genuine mentoring in senior appointments in the academia. A new development is the impact of the digital revolution on the role and function of the academic. It will change the entire publication landscape – and also the status of the academic expert him or herself. Hierarchical barriers in research are already disappearing worldwide as the digital media

changes communication within and about science. This is how young researchers in particular are increasingly breaking through rigid social structures of the scientific community by means of direct dialogue via blogs, mailing lists or Twitter. Those who would like to survive in this new world will have to expand their communication skills to include the new channels of digital communication.

What do you think about ResearchGate, an online network for scientists?

I welcome initiatives such as ResearchGate – the more exchange and visibility of research results there is, the better. Moreover, the “Open Science” principle represented by ResearchGate founder Ijad Madisch is important food for thought for the debate surrounding the future of scientific cooperation.

Globalization and worldwide access to the Internet currently contribute to the sharp increase of MOOCs, Massive Open Online Courses. Elite universities such as Stanford, Yale, and the Massachusetts

Professor Wolfgang Reinicke

Background

Wolfgang Reinicke received his MPhil and PhD in political science from Yale University and also holds degrees from Queen Mary College of London University and Johns Hopkins University/SAIS. He is president of the Global Public Policy Institute (GPPi), which he co-founded in 2003, and founding dean of the School of Public Policy at Central European University in Budapest which was inaugurated in 2011. Reinicke is also a non-resident senior fellow in the foreign policy studies program at the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C. where he worked

full-time as a senior scholar from 1991 to 1998. From 1998-2000 he was a senior partner and senior economist in the Corporate Strategy Group of the World Bank in Washington, D.C.. From 1999 to 2000, while in Washington, Reinicke directed the Global Public Policy Project, which provided strategic guidance on global governance for the UN Secretary General’s Millennium Report. From 2000-2011 he worked in the private sector as managing director of galaxar s.a.

Institute of Technology all participate in this trend – but also the University of Lüneburg, where star architect Daniel Liebeskind holds the “Digital School.” What effects do you see this new trend having on teaching?

In my opinion MOOCs are to be welcomed mainly because they – if they are offered at low cost or even free of charge –enable access to knowledge to those who were previously excluded. This is a phenomenal opportunity. MOOCs are, in addition, effective promotional tools for universities and individual academics. They also put pressure on the business models of many universities from the middle to lower market segment in countries with high tuition fees. In any case, there is now hardly any reason why students should be tormented by mediocre lectures in overcrowded lecture halls. However, the experience of academic life that one has as a student or a lecturer on campus, through common learning at good

liberal arts colleges and at renowned research universities, cannot be replaced by online teaching and learning. This is particularly true in the humanities and social sciences, where the acquisition of judgment plays a central role. The great benefit of MOOCs though is that they free up space. Thus there is more time for in-depth seminar discussions, for seemingly offbeat questions and academic debates; the things that on-campus classes can focus on as a result. Of course this type of “flip teaching” requires more intensive work with students. In addition, there are other promising options to continuously improve learning: students can read texts through new programs and use collaborative online tools to share margin notes and annotations with each other while reading. All of these innovations connect students and individuals eager to learn beyond national borders. This is very significant progress.

Let’s conclude with a brief look, as you have already briefly mentioned, at your

Unread messages and missed calls are waiting for a response: Wolfgang Reinicke quickly takes care of some of them before he sets off for a joint visit to a restaurant with colleagues, including Rahel Dette.



joint project funded by the Foundation, called “Global Norm Evolution,” which began in 2013: you work on the topic with researchers from Hungary, Great Britain, Brazil, India and China. Therefore this projects embodies the width of the international cooperation and project design which you have previously outlined in our conversation...

This is required by the topic and our self-understanding as globally oriented researchers. The project embraces the fact that non-Western powers such as Brazil, Russia, India, China and also South Africa (the so called BRICS countries) take increasing interest in shaping global norms. We are now experimenting – which is very important for the research approach – with a very complex method. Each of the seven participating institutions is responsible for one country study and one to two case studies (discussed in detail on page 11) European scientists work in tandem with their Brazilian, Indian and Chinese colleagues to conduct joint fieldwork. In this way, in each case and country study, Western and non-Western perspectives inform each other and each scientist involved inevitably conducts interview research in at least one foreign cultural context. What we hope for as a side effect is that scientists

will learn to work in an intercultural context. On top of that, we hope to have a good mix of experienced and very talented young scientists on board. We are glad to be able to work with young researchers who will have great scientific influence in their home countries in ten or twenty years from now. They are our multipliers: for the present, by carrying the findings of this project and the shape and concept of the research into their own circles, and for the future.

What particular challenges do you see for the research project, and what does it ultimately aim to achieve?

We would like to stimulate debate and hope that our work will inform practice. For years now, we have observed a new confidence in the BRICS countries: this is, for instance, noticeable in international debates, be it in their comments on climate change, on trade policy, or on the questions of war and peace. It signals that in the future the West, the U.S. in particular, can no longer set the rules on its own. And it means that we must find new forms of global interaction and agree on new processes and procedures of how to reach common ground. This is particularly true with regards to conflicts in which many human lives are at stake, like in Syria and in Libya. Our central

Research Consortium “Global Norm Evolution”

Background

Seven working groups in six countries participate in the research consortium “Global Norm Evolution.” Besides the coordination team Wolfgang Reinicke, Thorsten Benner and Philipp Rotmann from Global Public Policy Institute



in Berlin the following senior researchers are involved in the project:

- Christopher Daase, **Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany;**
- Xymena Kurowska, **Central European University, Budapest, Hungary;**
- Ricardo Soares de Oliveira, **University of Oxford, United Kingdom;**
- Matias Spektor/Oliver Stuenkel, **Fundação Getulio Vargas, Brazil;**
- CSR Murthy, **Jawaharlal Nehru University, India;**
- Zhang Haibin, **Peking University, China.**

Every team also has several junior researchers.

Seven working groups in six countries: The coordination of such a research consortium requires constant communication and good planning.



What are the prospects for the protection of civilians in zones of crisis? Reinicke discusses in Berlin with researcher Sarah Brockmeier.

price requires a lot of sacrifice – and trust in the institutions that underpin a changing notion of sovereignty.

The keywords are “to inform practice”: how close is the relationship between science and policy really? And how do policy-makers try to take in to account what academia has to offer – and how much should they draw from projects like yours?

It takes two to tango. In America there is a strong link between policymakers and advisors from think tanks and some universities. To begin with, researchers must try to present a particular problem in a language spoken by policy-makers, and they must of course provide concrete, realistic policy options. For policy-makers it is key to be able to capture the following as clearly as possible: what are the policy implications, as well as conclusions for political practice?

Funding Initiative “Europe & Global Challenges”

Today, problems ranging from regional conflicts, migration, and terrorism to pandemics and financial instabilities are perceived as “global challenges”. Europeans share these problems with the rest of the world, but do they also share a knowledge base to address them through collective action? In order to explore concrete answers to this question the European foundations Compagnia di San Paolo in Italy, Riksbankens Jubileumsfond in Sweden, and Volkswagen Foundation in Germany, launched the research program “Europe and Global Challenges” in 2009.

The aim is to inspire scholarly interest in global challenges beyond mere cooperation at the European level, and to promote collective supranational action on a global scale. Funding is provided to support the formation of interdisciplinary groups of international

researchers comprising scholars from both European as well as non-European countries. Collaboration with researchers from emerging and developing countries is of particular importance.

So far, there have been two rounds of funding. In the first call, six cooperative projects were chosen from a pool of 120 applications through a multi-step selection process. Since 2011, the six research groups have, among others, been engaged in research on the consequences of the financial crisis on international trade and foreign direct investment, as well as in research on the energy policy of the European Union towards emerging countries, and on adapting to climate change, in China, India, and Europe. Each of the three foundations act as primary funders of two of the joint research projects. Those in the portfolio of the Volkswagen Foundation are anchored in

Policymakers will therefore only listen to academics if they have something precise, concise, and practical to offer?

Yes, and it is thus also important to consider whether the measures proposed can be paid for, that the proposed path appears politically feasible in the current political constellation – and also, that it is internationally enforceable. Without taking this and other relevant factors into consideration, advice falls flat fairly quickly. We also want to assume an incubator function with our joint research project: if we can initiate something on the basis of our research findings, which policy-makers can possibly drive further – that would be a great success. In my opinion, there are great resources in science and policy advice, which decision-makers could tap into. Foundations would therefore do well, if they were to invest into improving the interface between research and practice – and scientists themselves could truly benefit from the interaction with

practitioners. That way they do not only ensure that the results of social science research will leave the ivory tower, but they will also receive ideas for relevant new research questions. For me personally, working at the interface between research and practice is rarely without tensions, yet always exciting, and it is a huge motivation for the work of both the Global Public Policy Institute as well as the new School of Public Policy at the Central European University.

Mr. Reinicke, thank you for the interview.

Background

the Technical University of Darmstadt, and the universities of Kiel and Tübingen.

In 2011, the second call under the auspices of the initiative was launched. 15 of the 76 initially submitted project proposals took the first hurdle. In the summer of 2012, after a presentation of the shortlisted proposals – again, in front of an internationally composed selection committee – the decision was made to fund four joint projects, in which numerous partners from Europe and all over the world are involved. In addition to the already presented projects, two of these projects are once again part of a consortium led by the Volkswagen Foundation. In addition to the project on “Global Norm Evolution and the Responsibility to Protect” led by GPPi the Volkswagen Foundation funds a group on– “Climate Change Mitigation and Poverty Reduction – Trade-Offs or Win-Win Situations”. German lead partner in the

consortium is the German Institute of Global and Area Studies (GIGA) in Hamburg. The scientists tackle the question whether the goals of carbon reduction and poverty reduction rule each other out, or whether “green growth” is possible under corresponding conditions in prosperous emerging countries. The project focuses on the case of Mexico, South Africa, and Thailand.



At the end of the day the flip chart papers are covered with ideas: ample input for further work on the subject.



Wolfgang Reinicke in the entrance hall of the GPPi office leaning against an art installation. He likes this piece of art featuring the covers of biographies of key figures in world history.



Wolfgang Reinicke celebrates the ten year anniversary of GPPi and the successful start of the "Global Norm Evolution" project with the GPPi team in Berlin.

The Project "Global Norm Evolution"

Joining the United States, Europe and Russia as major powers, countries like Brazil, China, India and South Africa are demanding greater influence on the global order. As a result, fundamental global norms such as sovereignty and non-intervention are evolving in an increasingly contested way, in contrast to common theoretical expectations. The debate about a "responsibility to protect" civilians from mass atrocities is a prime example of this dynamic, according to Wolfgang Reinicke and his project partners.

Established theoretical approaches to global norms have been largely western-centric, linear and teleological, holding that norms ultimately emerge from the West and become universally accepted. The project employs the concept "norm evolution" to underscore the open-ended, non-linear aspects of this process. The project departs from the widespread notion that one particular interpretation of it is on a path toward legal codification.

To the contrary, it remains to be seen how different interpretations of a responsibility to protect will evolve, if any particular interpretation will gain traction as a universal legal principle at all, and how it will change during this process.

To examine this dynamic using the case of the Responsibility to Protect, researchers at seven academic institutions in Europe, Brazil, China and India are collaborating over a period of three years. The Global Public Policy Institute (GPPi) is the lead institution for the project.

In contrast to the simplistic image of "the West against the Rest," the project tracks shifting positions and coalitions both within the West and among other groups, for example the BRICS, the African Union and IBSA (India, Brazil and South Africa). Their different views and changing coalitions produce complex patterns of state practice in supporting, opposing or ignoring particular interpretations of the norm ("normative conflict").

"We divide the subject into two series of case studies," says Wolfgang Reinicke. On the one hand, researchers look at the basic attitude and the actions of the old and new powers, the U.S., Europe, Russia, Brazil, China, India, and South Africa for the selected period of 2005 to 2012: How did these powers position themselves with respect to the responsibility to protect? "Each of these powers have their own history, their own culture."

"On the other hand, we look at nine interaction case studies in detail." These interaction case

studies cover major diplomatic debates at the UN on R2P as well as concrete examples where the Responsibility to Protect was invoked. These cases include Syria, Libya, Myanmar, Georgia, Kenya and Darfur.

The case studies are based on qualitative research, i.e. analyses of documents and interviews that reflect the historical, cultural, and political context and the key arguments of the major players. "We work with highly topical questions, hence it is crucial to get hold of politicians and diplomats involved in each case, and also of journalists and activists, who shape public opinion."

"If we gain insights about specific mechanisms of norm evolution in the case of the Responsibility to Protect, we can perhaps apply them to other fields," says Reinicke. As other challenges of global importance, which are subject to a "norm evolution," he mentions climate change, trade, justice, social standards, or even dealing with weapons of mass destruction. "To manage the global power transition peacefully and embed global order in shared norms, is perhaps the most important challenge of our time," Reinicke concludes.

Knowledge transfer: first status symposium

The aim is that the results of all projects funded by the "Europe & Global Challenges" initiative (see also the boxes on the previous two pages) are widely communicated – especially in the participating countries, but also beyond; not only at universities and other academic institutions, but also to policy makers. In this respect, the gained knowledge serves strategically oriented, supranational action at the global level, in order to meet the challenges of the present and future appropriately. To this end, findings of the projects will also be communicated to the broader public and opinion leaders in politics, business, and various social groups.

Selected participants from the ten collaborative research projects participated in a conference in October 2013 in Hanover. The goal was cross-fertilization and exchange of experience among the different projects.

Christian Jung