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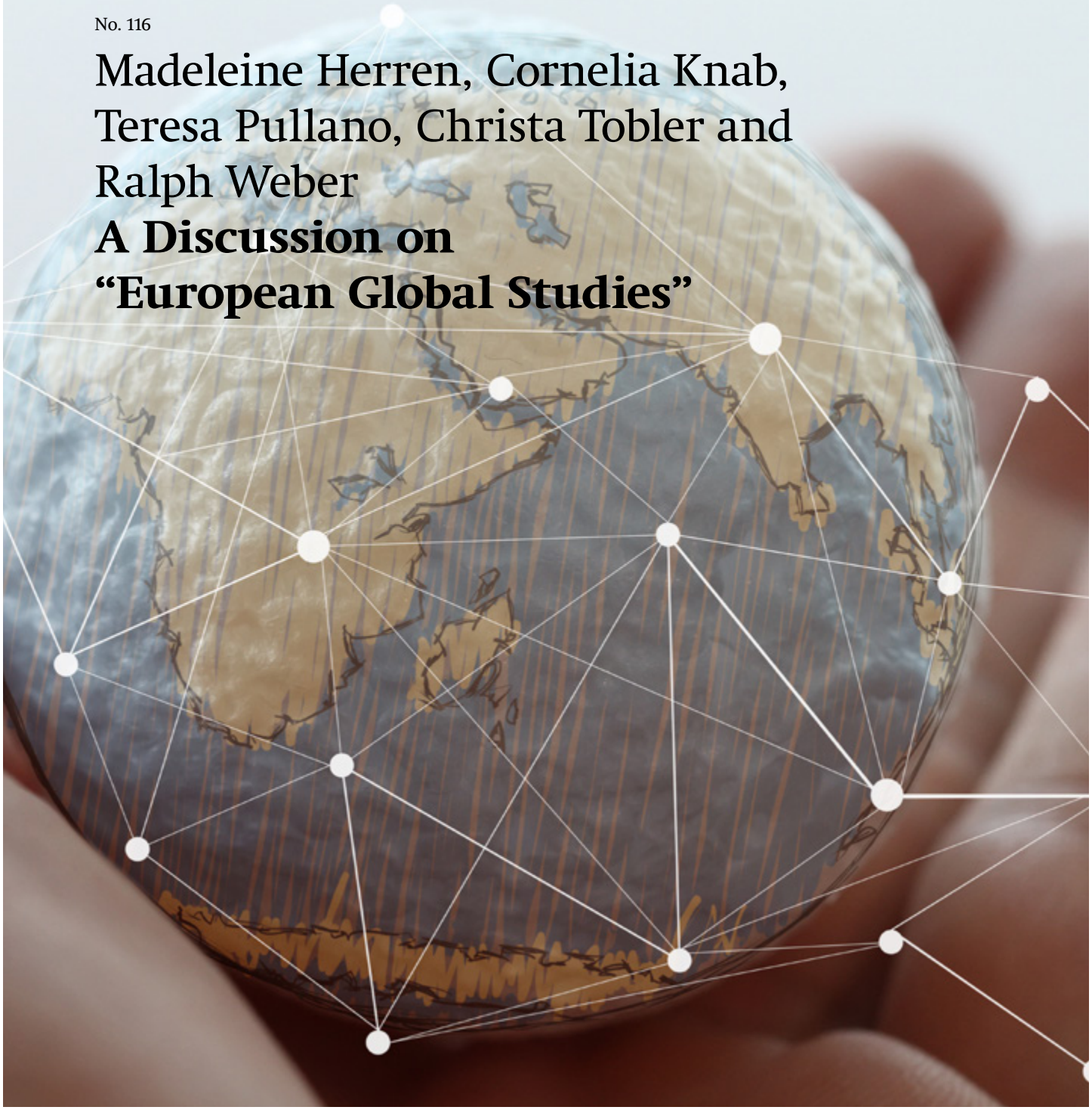
Madeleine Herren, Cornelia Knab, Teresa Pullano, Christa Tobler and Ralph Weber

A Discussion on "European Global Studies"



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The **Institute for European Global Studies** is an interdisciplinary research institute of the University of Basel. It conducts research on the development of Europe in a global context. The Study Program offers the Bologna-style Master of Arts (MA) in European Global Studies. The Institute for European Global Studies was established in 1992 and is funded by the University of Basel. It is supported by personalities from the fields of economy, politics, and culture. Director of the Institute for European Global Studies is the historian Prof. Madeleine Herren-Oesch.

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Madeleine Herren, Cornelia Knab, Teresa Pullano, Christa Tobler and Ralph Weber
(Institute for European Global Studies, University of Basel)

A Discussion on "European Global Studies"

Abstract: Responding to transformations often described by the shorthand expression "globalization", the *Europainstitut* (EIB) changed its English name in 2013 to Institute for European Global Studies. Five years later, members of the Institute came together to discuss their different views and assess the aims of European Global Studies. Among the points touched upon are the importance of different disciplinary backgrounds in this endeavor, the question of interdisciplinarity and/or transdisciplinarity, as well as the perceived challenges and promises with regard to the future of European Global Studies. The text printed below is a transcript of parts of this discussion, edited and framed with introductory paragraphs in order to increase readability and facilitate comprehension. The purpose of publishing this discussion on European Global Studies is to clarify the current agenda of the Institute, to showcase the plurality of approaches pursued under its roof, and also to outline its innovative potential for the Social Sciences and the Humanities in the 21st century.

Keywords: European Global Studies, Epistemology, Interdisciplinarity, History of Disciplines, Higher Education, Globalization, European Integration

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Teresa Pullano is assistant professor for European Global Studies at the University of Basel. She obtained her PhD at Sciences Po, Paris where she was associated professor from 2010-2011. As a visiting researcher, Teresa Pullano was at the Università degli Studi Roma Tre in Rome and at the Colombia University in New York. Her present research focuses on interpretations of the European Union as a process of statehood and territorial restructuring at the continental level. She also teaches interdisciplinary courses including political sciences, political theory and law. She has an ongoing project called *Africanizing Europe*.

Christa Tobler is professor for law at the Institute for European Global Studies in Basel and at the University of Leiden. Her main research topics are EU-Law with emphasis in bilateral law, economic law and social law. Christa Tobler worked at the Comparative Centre in Kyoto and in court as auditor and clerk. In 1994, she was *Winning Advocate General* at the European Moot Court competition. After she completed an intership at the European Court of Justice in Luxemburg, she joined an interdisciplinary research project at the European University Institute in Florence called *Gender and the Use of Time*. Christa Tobler is co-author of *Essential EU Law in Charts*. Furthermore, she was consulted by the House of Lords (upper chamber of the UK Parliament) regarding Brexit and is regularly interviewed by newspapers and TV stations as a specialist in bilateral law between Switzerland and the EU.

Ralph Weber is assistant professor for European Global Studies and academic director for the master's degree in European Global Studies at the University of Basel. He did his PhD in political sciences at the University of Saint Gallen and received his habilitation in philosophy at the University of Zurich. His main research interest are the philosophy and politics of European Global knowledge production as well as comparative and Chinese philosophy. Currently he is conducting several research projects, the newest being *The Exterior of Philosophy: On the Practice of New Confucianism* and *European Studies in a Global Perspective*. Ralph Weber is president of the European Association for Chinese Philosophy and co-chair of the section on Political Theory of the Swiss Political Sciences Association.

In the last ten years, the academic landscape has undergone substantial change. Established curricula and disciplinary profiles have encountered both the beginning of a digital age connecting actors on a global stage and a critical discussion on the issue of Eurocentrism. After the end of the Cold War, visions of cosmopolitan openness turned to a more critical understanding of globalization, while on the academic level globalization became a key term with an ambivalent message, namely to investigate the obvious increase of networking activities across all kinds of borders and to critically investigate the darker sides of globalization in its social and political consequences and its influences on regional contexts. Academic institutions with an interdisciplinary profile met these new regional *and* global challenges at an early stage. In Switzerland, the Basel Europainstitut was especially interested in embracing the dynamics of these challenges as an opportunity to develop a new vision in research and teaching. In 2015, the Institute replaced its Master program in European Studies with a Master in European Global Studies. Its research activities shifted to relational and more global approaches centering on research activities in fields such as European Global History, Transnational Law and Statehood, European Law and the relationship between Switzerland and the EU, Foreign Trade and European Integration, and the Politics and Philosophy of European Global Knowledge Production.

In June 2018 members of the Institute for European Global Studies came together to discuss different views on the aims pursued by those engaging in European Global Studies, the importance of different disciplinary backgrounds in this endeavor, the question of interdisciplinarity/transdisciplinarity and the perceived challenges and promises with regard to the future of European Global Studies. Despite obviously different viewpoints, an increasing interest in practices – and how they are linked to research approaches – connects the scholars involved in the following debate: Christa Tobler is a legal scholar who understands the European Union as a legal system *sui generis*, the rules of which can be studied from different disciplinary perspectives and, thereby, also beyond the disciplinary patterns of legal studies. Teresa Pullano works in political science, political philosophy and legal and social theory. She studies European integration as a process of redefinition of both citizenship and sovereignty and of the underlying categories of political subjectivity and statehood. She is interested in a new understanding of borders as a polysemantic offer, where globalization rather transforms than destroys statehood. More precisely, she works on legal techniques as instruments of restructuring of statehood, territory and subjectivity. Ralph Weber focuses on methodological, philosophical and political aspects of translinguistic and transcultural European Global knowledge production, paying special attention to modern Confucianism as well as Chinese philosophy and politics, more generally. Cornelia Knab and Madeleine Herren are global historians, interested in counter narratives, in forms and moments

of disentanglements of the world, and in the question to what extent the focus on practices supports a new narrative of a global history from below. All scholars involved share a common interest in enhancing interdisciplinary research by focusing on the problems of various forms of borders, their porosity and their relevance for multiple aspects of societal organization. In addition, the debate about new forms of interdisciplinary teaching and research aims at testing European Global Studies as an adequate solution to the need for new forms of global expertise for future generations.

The text printed below is a transcript of parts of this discussion, edited and framed with introductory texts in order to increase readability and facilitate comprehension. The purpose of publishing this discussion on European Global Studies is to clarify the current agenda of the Institute, to showcase the plurality of approaches pursued under its roof, and also to outline its innovative potential for the Social Sciences and the Humanities in the 21st century. Through the experience gained in research, we contribute to ongoing debates on the extent to which global scholarly approaches interact with local, national, or regional perspectives, and what new forms of narratives and argumentations develop out of such discussions. In addition, the conversation below should be understood as the expression of a debate that has reached almost all disciplines of the Social Sciences and Humanities. As declared in the preface of the newly announced *Oxford Handbook of Global Studies*[1], we encounter the emergence of a new scholarly field around an ambivalent and therefore contested understanding of globalization.

1 Mark Juergensmeyer, Saskia Sassen and Manfred B. Steger, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Global Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019).

1. The Nature and Aims of European Global Studies

The new Handbook of Global Studies *suggests placing the emerging field of global studies on four pillars, namely on globalization, transdisciplinarity, space and time, and critical thinking (Handbook 2018). Tailored to "European Global Studies", these four pillars are convincing, although shaped in different ways: globalization is related to the European and local contexts and therefore challenges the concept of area studies; transdisciplinarity includes a strong methodological focus and enables us to discuss the question of how research and academic teaching of European Global Studies should be framed; space and time introduce a historical rationale, which is, in our case, strongly related to the debates on global history[2]; and critical thinking has always formed an important counterpart to straightforward positivism, while the reflexivity it celebrates would include a hermeneutics of suspicion as to its own lines of criticism and its purportedly progressive agendas.*

In the following exchange, the discussants critically reflect on the nature of European Global Studies from their various academic backgrounds. Since the label "European Global Studies" obviously avoids a definition of the field based on conventional disciplinary references, the overarching question arises as to whether an academic discipline is still best defined by a research field or whether future scholars within the Social Sciences and Humanities will rally behind shared approaches from a more methodological point of view. In any case, and since methods and topics are interrelated, it would be fair to say that the understanding of topics is changing. We certainly witness a growing trend in almost every field of academic disciplines to investigate multilayered actors and practices beyond normative frameworks. The new key terms are relationality, interactivity, networks, transcultural exchanges and the complex dynamics of connections and disconnections. The nature of European Global Studies reflects these developments and at the same time aims to shape them.

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TERESA PULLANO:

I came to the question of European Union politics from philosophy. My question was more a question of how philosophy today engages with practice. So for me, it would be quite restrictive to call European Global Studies a discipline. It is first of all a method of enquiry. I was interested

2 Emily S. Rosenberg, ed., *Weltmärkte und Weltkriege, 1870–1945,* Geschichte der Welt, ed. Akira Iriye and Jürgen Osterhammel (München: C.H. Beck, 2012); Pierre Singaravélou and Sylvain Venayre, eds., *Histoire du Monde au XIXe Siècle* (Paris: Fayard, 2017); Sebastian Conrad, *What is Global History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016); Roland Wenzlhuemer, *Globalgeschichte schreiben: Eine Einführung in 6 Episoden* (Konstanz: UVK, 2017).

in understanding European integration because it offered me a case – and it might well prove to be too ambitious – for inventing a new method. In the end, it is more a question of tools and dynamics.

CORNELIA KNAB:
I would agree with Teresa. One of the principal aims is to develop methodologies for understanding the contemporary world, and I would maybe add understanding the role of Europe relationally. For me, it is not about primarily investigating the European Union – this is just a part of it – but rather Europe as a "Denkraum", and also as a multicultural project. Europe, understood along these lines, evidently takes on different roles, and to investigate these roles in a global context would be one of the principal goals of EGS. This includes, for example, the historical constitution of Europe in reference to colonialism, meaning "colonial" in a very broad sense referring to how colonial relations are constructed in many ways, and what relevance that has for the present.

CHRISTA TOBLER:
My own background is more indebted to a multidisciplinary approach, where European integration is studied from the different perspectives of economics, law, political science and history. When I was appointed here, it was as Professor of European Union Law with a focus on European integration – and that is still how I understand myself. For me, it is important to note that while law is a system that regulates things, law is never an aim to itself. It is meant to serve society by pursuing certain societal aims. In the case of the European Union, one would have to look at the noble aims stated at the beginning of the "Treaty on European Union", which is the most fundamental document of the European Union. The Union's overarching aim is to promote peace, its values and the well-being of its peoples. Its fundamental values include respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights. Starting from here, you can break it down and look into the specific areas of activity of the Union, and there you would ask yourself: How does the system work, how does it contribute towards the Union's higher aims, how does it function? European Union Law is a legal system with its own method and its own aims; it is in fact a very special type of international law. You cannot fully understand it if you look at it through the lens of general public international law – it is something of its own. Legal science is a science of analyzing, debating, developing arguments, criticizing what courts have done, for example, and developing suggestions on how one could move further in order to reach the aims of the law. In that sense, it might be rather different from other disciplines.[3]

3 See e.g. Carel Stolker, *Rethinking the Law School. Education, Research, Outreach and Governance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 200 ff.

RALPH WEBER:

For me, European Global Studies also proceeds from a focus on problems, be it problems in the practices of the academic world or of the political-economic world. Many of these problems have gained a new quality through the advent of what some refer to as 'globalization'. The nation-state structure has changed quite a bit, although I would be careful not to underestimate its continued importance in many fields. There are, however, certainly many new players on the ground and the ways of interaction have multiplied in complex manners. So from my point of view, one aim of European Global Studies would be to combine the two things, i.e. to combine new analyses of the problems of our time with the creation of new tools. Both the identification of the problems and the invention of tools to solve them depends on what we have available in terms of vocabulary, concepts, narratives and so on. Disciplines have a reifying function. In this sense, area studies might reify their respective areas in inappropriate ways. European Global Studies for me also helps us to think about the world and its regions differently. And regions and areas are still of major importance. European Global Studies – that grammatical monstrosity – has an irritating effect. This is what I like about it most; it is a wonderful thing for an academic approach. Yet, European Global Studies also finds itself translated into disciplinary characteristics, whether we want it or not. We have a successful Master program by that name, and you can earn a PhD in European Global Studies. Some of us have a venia legendi in European Global Studies. These are all disciplinary features, and we do well to reflect on and pay heed to unwanted reifying tendencies.

MADELEINE HERREN:

To me, European Global Studies is strongly related to the question of whether the perception of history has changed due to the process of globalization. The increasing importance of global history within academia reflects a well-known phenomenon, namely that history does not represent the past, but transforms these parts of the past into history that present society needs for different reasons. As an example, I would like to mention the idea of the Silk Road: what is today the metaphor of a historical narrative on crossing boundaries did not exist in those times always mentioned in today's description of the Silk Road. The expression "silk road" was invented in the 19th century, and those working on these trading routes did not understand themselves as being part of a globally connected system. It is therefore interesting to reflect on current Chinese politics, where the Silk Road has become an important metaphor. Referring to the function of a historical rationale within European Global Studies, I can at least declare what is *not* my aim in creating European Global Studies: I am not interested in gaining a definition of European Global Studies by specifying a list of topics. At the same time, the field should avoid

geopolitical limits. It should not investigate just the European Union, or Switzerland, or world politics. I prefer to understand European Global Studies as a methodological approach. I would say this is the strength we have and the bridge to interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity. And to the extent that it is about changing methodologies, I would also say that European Global Studies is perhaps an analytical lens; a way to ask questions, to develop research strategies which in a way go further than those of our core disciplines, but always reflect this distance between what was described as the core of a discipline and what happens now. So what Ralph described, that we have to find an answer because we are in a fast changing, indeed globalized world. The analytical lens is somehow the abstract aim. The topic-related aim is, I would say, a new focus on Europe and looking at Europe from the outside in a multidirectional approach.

TERESA PULLANO:
Just to clarify: when I said method I meant exactly the analytical lens. And I purposely used the term method and not methodology, taking it for example from Sandro Mezzadra's book *Border as Method* (2013)[4]. Because method, as it is used there, is an epistemological question: there is the analytical lens, and there is also the question of the "Denkraum" – so it is the space that is also defined by the lens – and I would say that there is also the grammar which could be a conceptual grammar, and at the same time also a social and political grammar.

MADELEINE HERREN:
The shift from a more normative understanding of academic disciplines to the question of how research is done is crucial for a new way of thinking in collaborative and interdisciplinary contexts. In discussing the evolution of global studies from an institutional point of view, Juergensmeyer[5] addresses to what extent global studies scholars argue within or outside their respective disciplines. That is certainly an important question, but I have another concern: the methods provided by data sciences actually have the most important impact on research across all disciplines imaginable. This development addresses a debate that, I find, is still not discussed properly, namely the confrontation between the epistemological profiles of Social Sciences and Humanities and the model building data sciences are offering. To me, the question of how normative orders are challenged by practices brings into focus all kinds of presuppositions. Focusing on interacting practices performed by a multiplicity of actors is a way to understand where the scopes of action are. That is why I am so fascinated by legal questions. I mean putting the rules on

4 Sandro Mezzadra, *Border as Method or, the Multiplication of Labor* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013).
5 Mark Juergensmeyer, "The Evolution of Global Studies," in *The Oxford Handbook of Global Studies,* ed. Mark Juergensmeyer, Saskia Sassen and Manfred B. Steger (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 21-35.

the table and discussing the rules means, of course, that you reflect all possibilities for breaking the rules. And I think in a very fast changing situation, breaking rules and the consequences of breaking rules – at least to me – is a completely fine starting point for thinking about how the society works, what the elements of societal coherence are, and that of course would also involve a common historical narrative or historical ground. But I am first of all interested in these gaps and cracks, in the disentanglements and less in the entanglements.

CHRISTA TOBLER:
From a legal perspective, that might be a bit of a short cut. If we were to ask questions from a legal perspective, our logical first question would be "is the rule valid?" That is a question of competence and procedures and so forth. If the rule is valid, then comes the question of "how should it be interpreted and how much room for interpretation does it leave?" Usually it does leave room for several interpretations, so you have to find out which one, in your view, is the correct one. Only then comes the question "and what if we do not stick to it, if we break it"? Still, in the end Madeleine is right. We like to believe that first you want to stick to the rules, including those on competence. However, in fact there is lot of breaking of rules.

CORNELIA KNAB:
Thinking about what Madeleine said on the topic-related aim of European Global Studies, which she said involves looking at Europe from the outside: I am not so sure about this. Is it not indeed an aim of European Global Studies to rethink these boxes of "inside" and "outside" and to put them in relation? But of course, in the long run, the idea what "Europe" is, what "Global" is, what the relations are, and on a broader level, what the relations of European Global Studies are, must be rethought, too.

TERESA PULLANO:
When we conducted a project on "Connecting Europe" a few years back, I doubted the importance of the connections. And now, instead, I see that in the political repertoire of action this question of networks and connections is key and also the tool for breaking the rules, also of the European Union and the Eurozone. But it is very important not to conflate the two levels. The interest of European Global Studies is to be a bridge in between the analytical level (the grammar level, the tools, etc.) and the concrete level. If these two levels are conflated, then the whole endeavor crashes. So, I think in terms of what should be done, one has to work in this "in between".

MADELEINE HERREN:

The "in between" is exactly the most interesting space, but also the most unusual. Because normally historians also argue on what the entity is, what the safe side is, and what is stable. And then, coming from this, you go to the next step. What we have to learn is to jump in this "in between" and to keep it open. For example, what is really fascinating is how the legal scholars are handling transgender issues, because it is sort of an "in between". And I was truly surprised that this is a field with quite a lot of activity.[6] Sure, there are not too many people working in this field if you compare it to the large majority of legal scholars. But the work that is being done creates exactly this kind of "in between" thinking. The seemingly most obvious – which is gender – does not fit any more. And I think this is exciting.

RALPH WEBER:

These notions of "in between", "connections", "networks", and "relationality" are some of the things I am most interested in when it comes to European Global Studies. For example, this gives us a chance to rethink what "relationality" might mean. This is something that many disciplines are currently discussing. Everyone wants to be relational. "Relationality" is a big buzzword. It is also found in Sociology and, finally, in International Relations Theory – a discipline that over the last century has more or less blissfully ignored one word in its title. And this is, I think, where philosophy can contribute something, mostly on what modes of "relationality" are there: the inside and outside or the "in between", connections and disconnections, entanglements and disentanglements, third spaces and other notions like these. In terms of logic it might be interesting to enquire how a relation is transcribed into logic, especially today, when many logics are available, such as fuzzy and multi-valued logic or Indian logic – and relations can be conceptualized through all of them. What metaphors go with relationality is also an interesting topic to investigate. And from a more mainstream analytical philosophical point of view: what is the ontology of a relation and what are its metaphysics?[7] I think this buzzword could be illuminated and maybe gain more force if these sorts of enquiries were made. And European Global Studies could incite such thought within philosophy and vice versa, which would be a great contribution in my view.

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6 Laura A. Belmonte, Mark Philip Bradley, Julio Capó, Paul Farber, Shanon Fitzpatrick, Melani McAlister, David Minto, Michael Sherry, Naoko Shibusawa and Penny Von Eschen, "Colloquy: Queering America and the World," *Diplomatic History* 40, no. 1 (January 2016): 19-80.

7 Anna Marmadoro and David Yates, eds., *The Metaphysics of Relations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

2. Intellectual Avenues to European Global Studies

The frontispiece of the famous French Encylopédie edited by Diderot and D'Alembert presented, at the very beginning of this endeavor of Enlightenment, a newly shaped universe of knowledge.[8] *At the very center stands Truth in between Rationality and Philosophy, followed by a hierarchy in the fields of knowledge: in this epistemological universe, philosophy replaced theology, and applied sciences (e.g. geometry) and poetry had their specific status. The epistemological concurrence seems obvious. Until today, the question is crucial in which epistemological framework arguments develop. In the following section, the question is: what changed after the Cold War ended, a digital revolution started, and the focal points of economic and political strength shifted from "the West" to "the Rest"? This dynamics of transition found its expression in blurring disciplinary boundaries that created new research questions: Who is legally responsible if a robot kills a person? Do human beings have the right to make their own choice with regard to gender? Is the protection of a national market more important than human rights? What is the impact of data sciences? Is this approach just an additional analytical tool or should we translate the frontispiece in a way that an epistemological approach will be replaced with algorithm-based modelling in the entire scientific field? In the following discussion, the tensions between different methodologies unfold in a debate that addresses the different intellectual avenues that lead to European Global Studies and that ranges from questions concerning the role and significance of history, postcolonial and critical theory, the Frankfurt School, area studies and classical philology to comparatism.*

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CORNELIA KNAB:

The question of different avenues towards European Global Studies is interesting. I think it is not enough to say that there are different disciplines and different perspectives and so on. First of all, we have disciplinary backgrounds, but we have also intellectual backgrounds and, what is more, transdisciplinary backgrounds; I am thinking of theoretical inputs which are important in several disciplines, such as Postcolonialism. From this point of view, and considering the question of pathways towards European Global Studies, I wonder whether maybe different approaches existed far earlier, in the 17th and 18th centuries. Jürgen Osterhammel has famously pointed out how Europe in the 18th century compared itself to others, and since the 19th century Europe

8 http://encyclopedie.uchicago.edu/content/frontispice-explication.

has thought itself to be incomparable.[9] Obviously there was a lot of thinking over the centuries and in different parts of the world on what Europe is and how Europe is constructed, especially in relation to its global connections – and, further, what Europe meant and still means for the non-European world too. It might be stimulating to explore such discussions to gain insights into the intellectual and indeed very interdisciplinary background of European Global Studies, and into its historicity in a long-term perspective.

MADELEINE HERREN:

I cannot imagine European Global Studies without the historical dimension. The historical dimension is something that brings many of us together. Even if one focuses on legal cases, these too have history and need to be contextualized in the respective societies. While the importance of history for the globalized 21st century is obvious, there is a downside to it, as all too often the historical dimension is easily applied without giving it much methodological thought, which I believe is wrong. What is interesting to me is how global history developed within the discipline. We need to remember that in 1989 the most important article with a historical perspective – although written by a non-historian – was Francis Fukuyama's "The End of History"[10]. Fukuyama declared the end of history because he thought that we had reached, after the end of the Cold War, the final standard of modern democracy, which would spread worldwide. This approach was crucial for the 1990s, which is not such a long time ago. Now we have a world in which a historical approach is a question of the courts. In Poland you cannot say certain things about collaborators. In China it is completely forbidden to touch the heroes of the communist revolution. All around the world and in very different systems, we witness an unfree discourse about the circumstances under which the past is turned into history, meaning into something that is important for society. Non-historians and more often than not lawyers have become the arbiters of history. This is an interesting development. The use of the past is also part of the mentioned analytical lens, and to me the use of the past indicates how far a society goes in including what is considered foreign, i.e. not part of what they think they need in terms of a stable heritage.

TERESA PULLANO:

I must admit that I do not particularly like the question of history as a lens. It is important to open up the question on how anyone who is in research wants to integrate the historical

9 Jürgen Osterhammel, *Die Entzauberung Asiens: Europa und die asiatischen Reiche im 18. Jahrhundert* (München: C. H. Beck, 1998), 378; see also Sebastian Conrad and Andreas Eckert, "Globalgeschichte, Globalisierung, multiple Modernen: Zur Geschichtsschreibung der modernen Welt," in *Globalgeschichte: Theorien, Ansätze, Themen*, ed. Sebastian Conrad, Andreas Eckert and Ulrike Freitag (Frankfurt/New York: Campus, 2007), 10.

10 Later published as Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Free Press, 1992).

dimension. As Cornelia has put it, I am worried that this fixes European Global Studies in a certain point in time. Talking about heritage means there is a past and an origin, and that there will be something else in the future. For me it is rather important that this "European Global" was "invented" by Madeleine. Understood in this way, it stays a dynamic element helping us reflect about time. In my view, history should be applied as a lens in movement and not as a fixed lens. The question is perhaps more which kind of intellectual tradition everyone can bring into this open box of European Global Studies. Maybe this is where the discussion can be more fruitful. Of course there is Postcolonialism, but it is criticized. There is critical theory and post-structuralism, but they are criticized for being Eurocentric. In terms of intellectual heritage and possible avenues to European Global Studies, I see on the one hand postcolonial theory and critical theory, but on the other hand also Marxist philosophy and the first Frankfurt School. This is precisely the heritage from which I took the question of historical matrix: from Nicos Poulantzas and the first Frankfurt School, which is important with its reflexivity approach that combines the repertoires of action and the lens with the grammar.

RALPH WEBER:
I agree with not fixing disciplines. But I also think that disciplines do not lend themselves in the first instance to being fixed – one could try, but it would be in vain. Disciplines go wherever. The important element on which I agree is the openness. That is why the exercise of showing different avenues to arriving at European Global Studies should not mean fixing it in any way, but it should open it up. From my point of view, European Global Studies is also about area studies and classical philology (including Indology, Sinology, Japanology, etc.) and the question about the status they should enjoy in universities today. The discussions about "small" disciplines and a fruitful way of saving and using this sort of specialty knowledge in the university landscape plays into this, too. In my view, the "small" disciplines stand to profit from approaches like European Global Studies.
It is important to remind ourselves, though, that area studies came up at the end of the Second World War in the United States and were tailored to fit a specific political agenda. Later, after they were incorporated into the structures of universities, they went through a long phase of criticism, continuingly for political reasons, but increasingly also for theoretical reasons, most prominently for mistakenly adopting a so-called "container-view". So, today, if we talk about area studies, we must be very careful. Still, recent discussions about new area studies offer another intellectual avenue to European Global Studies. Comparative area studies or global area studies

are labels that are passed around in these circles.[11] From my own point of view, European Global Studies is different from these two approaches. It is not about comparison, and it is not about lifting these areas onto a global level. Personally, I am interested in "post-comparative area studies" – which for me is how area studies, in a revived way, could find an intellectual home that is beyond comparison.

In this sense, it should be evident that European Global Studies is not an approach restricted to the study of Europe in any way. It is an approach that can, and perhaps should, lead to the study of China in terms of Chinese Global Studies, and respectively likewise to African Global Studies, Shanghai Global Studies, Shanghai Chinese Studies and so on. The idea of this is that relationality amounts to a distinction between focus and scope. And scope is what you think you should incorporate in your thinking to deal with the problematic; it may well lead you to places and ideas that are not primarily considered as European. But the problem that one tackles is still located within a certain focus. So, when we say we study the world to understand Europe – as shorthand and a simplified version of European Global Studies – there is a separation between scope and focus. It is in this regard that area studies – that have traditionally been about "in order to understand China you have to look at China", exemplifying the mentioned "container-view" – have by and large failed in the past. In my view, European Global Studies is a way of mending this shortcoming and opening up once again the free play of scope and focus, which is also intellectually the more attractive enterprise.

TERESA PULLANO:

For me, the point you raise is indeed crucial, but I disagree. The reason is that European Global Studies are a lens or a method and located within a way of thinking concepts, which are always within contradictions of power and of history. I am worried that it might even be dangerous to separate focus and scope. It is of course crucial to have a reflexive position concerning one's own situatedness in a given historical and political context. Nevertheless, this does not mean that it is impossible to take a critical distance from one's own position, quite to the contrary. I don't want to say that if you are European you talk about Europe, not at all. It is possible to have a universalist discourse on Europe without being European oneself, and there exist important critical traditions on Europe within European thinkers. But what one needs to take into account are power differentials. Otherwise one runs the risk of another universalism.

11 Ariel I. Ahram, Patrick Köllner and Rudra Sil, eds., *Comparative Area Studies: Methodological Rationales & Cross-Regional Applications* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

MADELEINE HERREN:

Several times "relationality" and the setting of relations instead of topics or locations were mentioned as a way to describe the expected impact of European Global Studies. Although we agree on relationality, there is still a crucial difference – or perhaps a disciplinary misunderstanding? – when it comes to fixing the reference points of such a relational system. The question is whether Europe is exchangeable as suggested by Ralph, and whether working with a historical rationale will restrain our understanding of a dynamic and changing relationality, as mentioned by Teresa. To me, Europe is not a substitute due to the consequences of Eurocentrism. A Eurocentric past influences the way we as Western scholars put together our arguments. In the 1990s, modernization as the leading argument of historical development changed in the "Great Divergence" debates, thus arguing that around 1800 Europe was not at all expected to reach the status of the powerhouse of the world, and argumentation referring increasingly to Asia and China, which had dominated the world for much longer than the two short European centuries[12]. Following then Eisenstadt's idea of "multiple modernities", the discussion approached the crucial question of what we should compare, and to what extent a global approach will influence the methodological framework of comparatism. We have compared for a long time, for example, states, legal systems, elites, or political parties. Comparatism does not allow an understanding of fuzzy borders because you need entities to be compared. This is highly problematic. Of course we could also compare networks or border crossing structures, but there is a risk that post-comparatism turns out to be old-fashioned comparatism with a new name. I myself favor a post-institutional approach. One of the most important changing elements in this world is the meaning and value of institutions. I do not say that they disappear – quite the opposite is true, they even increase in importance. But the institution is not a reference point anymore: institutions are changing. A post-institutional approach may be a heuristic instrument that helps us to consider a multitude of actors on different levels, e.g. besides states or international organizations transnational movements, epistemic communities, those excluded and marginalized but still of crucial importance, as presented by Gilroy in his concept of the Black Atlantic[13].

CHRISTA TOBLER:

The topic of comparatism reminds me a lot of the legal discussion on equality and discrimination, which focusses on a comparison if you come from an Aristotelian definition of equality; how we have tried to overcome it, where it is very difficult and so on. I would generally say that comparing is of the essence in legal science. We cannot do without it. But look at what happened

12 Tirthankar Roy and Giorgio Riello, eds., *Global Economic History* (London et al.: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018).

13 Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (London: Verso, 1993).

with Brexit: we discussed potential models for the future relationship between the UK and the EU and the essence was to compare these models and to find out where the differences are, and then to see what might fit this new "special case", i.e. the "Sonderfall UK" – just as Switzerland likes to think of itself as a "Sonderfall". What I can easily relate to is that history is also an element that we need in law and in particular in European Union law. EU law is a highly dynamic system that has evolved over time, not least under the influence of the European Court of Justice. If you do not understand that, you will never understand how the system functions. Case law, dynamism, the historical development of the political framework of the treaty revisions; all this is absolutely essential. We tend to look at the European Union as a quasi-federation, that is, a system that, internally, functions similar to a federal state. From an external perspective, the impression is sometimes that the Union adopts a "hegemonic" attitude, trying to impose its standards on others in many fields, whether it is the rule of law and human rights through treaties with other countries, or data protection – in this case even in the context of wholly unilateral legislation, which in the media is discussed as the "new gold standard" in the field of data protection. In this sense, I think all things that have been mentioned also fit the issues that I am concerned with in my legal studies when it comes to methods.

TERESA PULLANO:
One thing I noticed in departments on European integration studies across continental Europe is that at the beginning they were all doing comparative politics, particularly in France and Germany. And now, given the development of European integration they can no longer keep up with what is happening. More and more they are having to follow a more comprehensive approach because the crisis cannot be tackled adequately with a solely comparative approach.

3. Interdisciplinarity/Transdisciplinarity

In many respects, interdisciplinarity has become a staple aspect of global knowledge production. There are hosts of graduate programs, centers, institutes, research projects, journals, and associations that are all decidedly and constitutively interdisciplinary. Policy-makers and funding agencies are often highly interested in interdisciplinary research as they readily equate it with applied science and therefore greater practical relevance. Employers of university graduates largely follow suit. A short glance at what goes under the label of interdisciplinarity, however, reveals the greatest variety of competing and at times even mutually exclusive approaches. As Harvey Graff remarks, commentators not only disagree about whether the trend towards interdisciplinarity is to be judged positively or negatively, they also showcase astonishingly different understandings of interdisciplinarity.[14] It hence behooves an institution such as the Institute for European Global Studies, which understands itself as markedly interdisciplinary, to reflect critically on the many notions of interdisciplinarity and the variety of approaches pursued by its members. In the discussion that follows, viewpoints expressing understandings ranging from multidisciplinarity to crossdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity are expressed and contrasted. The subject matter finds itself related to issues as different as perceived shifts from topic-related research to an increased focus on method, the history of disciplines, the criticism of interdisciplinary fuzziness, and the straightforward necessity for interdisciplinarity in the study of European integration.

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CORNELIA KNAB:

Interdisciplinarity at its best includes, I think, a constant reflection process on the construction of borders, and on their significance in shaping how we understand and frame our own research topics and questions. It is this reflection process that then leads to an understanding of how methodologies of different academic disciplines can be used in a fruitful and innovative way. Interdisciplinary debates include, for me, a strong inspiration to think 'outside the box'. Integrating multiple methodologies in order to gain insights through new perspectives of research is therefore only one important aspect of interdisciplinarity. It also includes the active reflection on your own methods, that what you are doing is linked to a historical context and is framed in a specific way because of a certain background. This constant reflection process helps you to broaden your horizon to explore very different perspectives on your research topics. In a disciplinary-shaped research focus, one would probably not be able to consider such different

14 Harvey J. Graff, "The 'Problem' of Interdisciplinarity in Theory, Practice, and History," *Social Science History* 40 (Winter 2016): 775-803.

perspectives to the same extent. I think interdisciplinary approaches also expose very new topics of research that had been previously overlooked because of disciplinary box-thinking. There are many topics of research which, in my view, intrinsically require an interdisciplinary approach to be adequately addressed.

MADELEINE HERREN:
To me, crossing disciplinary borders shifts in crucial ways the historiographical tools and the methods we use to establish empirical evidence. For historians, empirical evidence was for a very long time confined exclusively to texts, i.e. written traces of the past. Of course, you cannot open up globally by only focusing on texts. There are a lot of societies without such written evidence. Today, there is a renewed interest in revisiting the question of what counts as empirical evidence in the case of history. More and more, we also include objects and sounds. There is also the discussion about "intangible heritage". Such an opened up view on evidence automatically takes us in the direction of interdisciplinarity. However, to me, the inclusion of interdisciplinarity also indicates a more fundamental shift from topic-related research to methods. An additional aspect that comes with interdisciplinarity is the data revolution – the very understanding of what data is. Again, this is a question of empirical evidence. And interdisciplinarity is also an analytical tool that makes us aware of what has conventionally escaped our attention.

CHRISTA TOBLER:
My own exposure to interdisciplinarity in the past has been much related to the question of European integration. The basic idea was not to look only from one perspective, but to look at European integration from different angles. On the level of concrete aims, the economic perspective was probably the main interest at the time. However, European integration functions on the basis of legal rules, and those rules have been made in a political process, and there is a historical development of all of this. So the idea at the time was to have a more comprehensive look at the study object of European integration, rather than coming only from one single perspective which would leave out things that are important.

RALPH WEBER:
If you have been exposed to area studies, then interdisciplinarity is not that much of an issue. Area studies are notoriously interdisciplinary. The same goes with conventional European Studies, whether it is considered an area study like others or not. I want to say two things about interdisciplinarity. One is that interdisciplinary approaches often face the criticism of being fuzzy, ill-defined and so on. This, to an extent, is true. It is very hard to pin down interdisciplinarity in a clear

way. In my view, the best defense when faced with such criticism is to turn the tables around and ask "what is a discipline?" Personally, I have not yet come across a persuasive definition of what a discipline is. This opens up the issue of the contingency of disciplines; how they come about, how they change, their relation to power, etc. From this point of view, one can be at ease about interdisciplinarity and its purported lack of precision in its definition. The second point – and probably not everyone will agree with this – has to do with the idea that interdisciplinarity allows for a more comprehensive account of the study object. I think that interdisciplinarity is wrongly conceived if we have an additive model and think that by joining more disciplines we will see more of what the research object really is. I think this is mistaken. We never see more, but we see differently. And that is good enough for me. It boils down to a difference in slicing up the furniture of the world and approaching it. That can be very innovative and I think it is how new disciplines historically have often come about. In this contingency-story of disciplines, somebody starts doing things differently and if he or she finds enough followers, at one point the approach might be turned into a discipline and then becomes problematic, again, for that very reason. This is how I think the engine of compartmentalized knowledge production works. Interdisciplinarity is also an ability that one needs to train and I believe there are great promises in store for those who succeed in really slicing up the furniture of the world in a new way and against the reifying tendencies of disciplines. Disciplines should not be presented as if they had existed in the same fashion for 150 years. None of them have. Still, this is not to deny that disciplinary approaches have advantages, too, say, in terms of shared disciplinary training and therefore mutually acknowledged reference points. All of that I would not want to do away with. I would want to have both at the same time. Interdisciplinarity in its transdisciplinary variant – seeking to transcend disciplinary borders to the extent that the different identities of disciplines no longer matter – in my view does not have to embrace the more far-reaching claims of postdisciplinarity (which holds that having disciplines at all is the real problem).

MADELEINE HERREN:
Disciplines resulted almost without exception from a process of academic differentiation – I'll just mention Sir Isaac Newton who was, in his time, a philosopher and not a scientist. I would even make a stronger point: interdisciplinarity has a function of mutual control regarding what the methods of the respective disciplines are silencing. It is about checks and balances. But we must not forget that what we are doing here also changes our disciplinary understanding. I am always saying that, yes, I am a historian and, yes, I do disciplinary history. But this is only one part of my work. I have another part, which is interdisciplinary work. I need to check what the methodologies of my discipline are worth by testing them against other points of view. I need

this control because, when you are pursuing a global perspective, such constant reflection is required. It is impossible to master the whole world, which is why checks and balances are mandatory. In this sense, there is nothing fuzzy about interdisciplinarity. It is a far cry from the sort of American Western Studies that cover the US and the rest of the world in two hours. It goes much deeper because you have to bring precise arguments to a debate in which there are plenty of specialists and experts to put you to the test and, if necessary, correct you.

TERESA PULLANO:

I agree with the importance of reflexivity and saying that it is not just adding but taking in different things. Yet Christa's point is highly relevant. Everyone who has been studying European integration can see clearly how at a certain time there was an objective need for interdisciplinarity. I definitely agree that we need something stronger than a multidisciplinary approach, and I feel that it is a somewhat tight jacket if we dissociate the questions. I do not want to have in European Global Studies one debate next to the other. For me the two are connected: there is no interdisciplinarity. I would associate the disciplines with post-institutional disciplines, which is again about power. Etienne Balibar says that we have to think within the conjuncture when he talks about his thinking about Europe.[15] What he means is that there is an aporetic constitution of the present conjuncture. And he says, there is an aporia of Europe – which refers to the impossibility to resort to classical categories – and the necessity of inventing new names for politics. He gives the example that it is impossible in the present conjuncture to think of the contiguity of ethnos and demos. This is a legal problem, a political problem, a historical problem, and a philosophical problem. That is why interdisciplinarity is, for me, completely connected to the aporia of Europe. Balibar reverses Marx (in his famous 11th Feuerbach thesis) by saying that we need to reinterpret the world in order to change it. Interdisciplinarity is completely linked to this aporia of Europe. I do not want it to be something pursued on the side. It is not only about the research design. This question about the impossibility in the present conjuncture to think of ethnos and demos as contiguous is exactly the question of what science is in the institutional and post-institutional approach to make this possible or impossible or aporetic, and thus how we see Europe today.

15 Etienne Balibar, Jean-Marc Poisson and Jacques Lezra, "The Infinite Contradiction," *Yale French Studies* 88 (1995): 142-164.

4. Challenges and Promises

Today, budgets for education and research on state levels and the European Union prefer to support research that is closely connected to innovation. The preferred topics have a mission-oriented profile with applicability as proof of their usefulness. The most attractive fields for investments are therefore artificial intelligence, including robotic and drone technologies, medical research and environmental questions. At first glance, Social Sciences and Humanities are marginalized in these settings, and today's Diderots would probably prefer to interpret their center of knowledge, Truth, as Algorithm. However, most of these investment programs are also aware of considering the consequences of these research projects, which are often thematized as societal and economic resilience. While resilience is a metaphor that covers reactions and adaptations rather than forms of decision making and participation, these challenges need a promise, an offer that academic education and research are investigating new analytical tools for a better understanding of transition periods with the aim of solving tensions on a political and social level in bargaining processes and not in military conflicts. The following discussion offers an insight into today's problematic situation from a variety of different aspects. From the need to offer a concise explanation of what European Global Studies is all about, to the necessity of addressing different publics: namely the public sphere interested in understanding integration processes and their challenges with the example of the European Union, the students in need of newly shaped (global) expertise, the scholars changing their disciplines in such a way that a fruitful dialogue creates insights and impacts on the obviously crucial transformation processes the 21st century has started with.

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CHRISTA TOBLER:

One of the very practical challenges I perceive is how to explain to the general public what "European Global" means. For example, both Madeleine's and Ralph's excellent inaugural lectures showed us clearly what it is about, Madeleine talking about "Global Europe: History as a process of complex entanglements", and Ralph presenting "China and Political Philosophy – paths and detours". But still, I often meet people who ask "what do you do exactly?" It seems hard to communicate, sometimes even within the scientific community itself but in particular to the general public. But then such explanation is necessary: after all, we are a public institution that needs public support. I usually say, obviously putting it very simply, that the term "European Global" indicates that we do not want to look at Europe only from the inside, but we also want to have the larger perspective. And people readily understand this. What it means in concrete terms remains, I find, difficult to explain.

TERESA PULLANO:
To me, Europe is a battlefield today. It is not only the "Denkraum", but very concretely a global battlefield. The question then is which tools are applied and how to define it.

CORNELIA KNAB:
These developments have certainly helped people understand what we are doing at the Institute for European Global Studies, and why the focus on exploring "European Global" is important both in terms of research and in terms of teaching. Once the refugee crisis came up, people suddenly started to gain a far better understanding of our agenda as relevant and interesting.

RALPH WEBER:
When we advertise our MA program, we use the example of the returnee problem of ISIS fighters in Europe. It is thought of as a problem in Europe, but how can you possibly tackle, let alone solve it, without drawing on expertise from Middle Eastern Studies, Religious Studies and so on? A more global expertise is required even if the problem, for the policy makers, plays out in Europe. There are plenty of examples. When reading the newspapers we actually see so many illustrations of this. But I agree with the general statement that it is not always easy to communicate our agenda and that this is a challenge we face.

MADELEINE HERREN:
I presented a map of Eurasia at the community college (*Volkshochschule*) as an illustration for European integration viewed from the perspective of China and Russia. The audience was shocked and said: "Oh my god! Europe is a very small part at the left of a huge continent". These kinds of illustrations make people immediately understand the importance of whether problem-solving is done multilaterally by a system such as the EU or only bilaterally by big states like Russia and China.
If I may add to the challenges: On the one hand, there are challenges with regard to attracting students who want to see migration featured prominently and who are interested in a global approach. This works well at the moment and teaching is of course a very important part of our work. On the other hand, there are challenges concerning research and the wider implications as to the future landscape of science, and particularly the Social Sciences and the Humanities. At this level, I see an analytical problem when it comes to offering an urgently needed dialogue with data sciences about the confrontation of modelling technologies and an epistemological approach. Is text mining more precise than our tools of analysis? Do we know what "data" means not just from a technological, but also from a societal point of view? Do we enhance a positivist

approach, or are we able to address even more successfully who is disappearing and who is silenced? We have to find an answer for what this modeling and digitalized world means, and how we can cope with it. I try to understand the challenge of European Global Studies also as a movement against positivist thinking. Because with all these digital strategies I am afraid we did not yet overcome a positivist mode of reflection.

TERESA PULLANO:
Two things on that: first, not all debates on big data and digital research strategies are positivist. Especially in the UK, the field is broad enough to feature different positions. There are people working in the intersection of social sciences and big data. Bruno Latour is a famous example of this.[16] Second, it is clear if we look at contemporary politics that data and social media are a factor political scientists need to consider. The question of social networks was used to shape the political field. European law, national law and politics need insights into the workings of big data and the digital world exactly to be able to control and answer the challenges that they pose.

CORNELIA KNAB:
Isn't it also one of the challenges – and here I come back to what Christa has said about the questions about "European Global" from the side of the public – to communicate the agenda of our research and our teaching adequately on several levels? On one level, it is highly important to communicate the analyses of scientific research about the current challenges and problems of this 'battlefield Europe', as Teresa has called it. On another level, it is significant to consider how to deal with the broad array of interdisciplinary methodologies in practices of teaching, how to integrate them in a way that students are able to make sense of interdisciplinary perspectives on the "European Global" during their own studies as well as for their further careers.

RALPH WEBER:
Many of our students will have global jobs. Maybe they will be an expat working in Singapore. And our universities should prepare them for this. If they go to the bookstore and do not reach for a book, say, about the history of Singapore, then we have failed as a university to prepare them for the global reach and sensitivity they should have.

16 Bruno Latour, *An Inquiry into Modes of Existence: An Anthropology of the Moderns* (Cambridge, MA/London: Harvard University 2013); Bruno Latour et. al., "'The Whole is Always Smaller than its Parts': A Digital Test of Gabriel Tardes' Monads," *The British Journal of Sociology* 63, no. 4 (2012): 590-615.

CORNELIA KNAB:

What is quite crucial is this self-reflexivity implied, in my view, in European Global Studies: people come from different backgrounds, but through European Global Studies they learn to reflect on the analytical categories of their own lens; to think about concepts and to reflect how these concepts are produced. It is a very basic thing, but still in many disciplines it is not brought across. Ultimately, this is one of the ways in which European Global Studies offers highly topical knowledge and skills for the 21st century and its challenges.

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