Global Cooperation Research: more important than ever before

After the first few weeks of the new year the public worldwide seems shocked. The macrogeotectonics of international relations face the considerable challenge of a transition period that is likely to witness a new adjustment of spheres of influence. Actors from civil society, finance, and expert networks are increasingly taking their share in international negotiations, as the current G20 process is likely to prove.

The Centre for Global Cooperation Research is a hub for interdisciplinary research on basic preconditions for successful cooperation. Populist movements, such as those which are currently arising in various countries (and continents), pose a challenge and also an opportunity to understand better what drives the retraction from the liberal agenda. Postcolonial discourses from a different angle impeach Western liberal consensus. Workshops and public lectures on these topics formed a considerable part of our efforts last year. Among these was a lecture series that we jointly organised with the Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities (KWI). In four lectures, renowned experts from various disciplinary backgrounds and the interested audience together discussed the underlying narratives, strategies as well as intrinsic logics and functions of contemporary extremist worldviews that pose serious challenges to global cooperation, such as the New Right and its ethnopluralism, populism in Europe, or Islamist fundamentalism. The global war on terror was also discussed.

The overarching theme of political narratives is one that the Centre will also be pursuing in 2017. In March we co-organize a conference on ‘Competing Narratives’ in Berlin (see article). Informed scenarios are an important part of the Centre’s expertise in dealing with pertinent policy fields. We therefore feel that our research today is more important than ever before.

Enjoy reading.

Dr Markus Böckenförde, LL.M.
Executive Director, Centre for Global Cooperation Research
News and Events

**The Place of International Courts and Tribunals in Contemporary International Relations**

KHK Lecture and Workshop in Berlin

A century ago, a primary reason for international courts and tribunals was the avoidance of war. Today, the discussion of 'function' has been renewed and is multifaceted. In the 20th Käte Hamburger Lecture, Professor David D. Caron examined this question, distinguishing between the functions that courts and tribunals play in international relations and the tasks that the judges are asked to undertake, as well as distinguishing between such functions and the motivations that lie behind the creation of international courts and tribunals.

Together with Tanja Aalberts, Director and Senior Researcher at the Centre for the Politics of Transnational Law, VU University Amsterdam, and Christian Tams, Professor of International Law at the University of Glasgow, he examined the possible implications of these distinctions for international relations and academic study.

Professor David D. Caron, who is a member of the Iran–United States Claims Tribunal, The Hague, and Professor of International Law at the Dickson Poon School of Law, King’s College London, thus provided first-hand insights on international law and international politics.

**How to Continue after Paris**

Practitioner Seminar in Berlin

A few months before COP22 in Marrakesh, the third expert workshop on global climate policy took place at the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities in Berlin. It brought together a select group of experts from government, science, journalism and civil society that was discussing questions on how the climate protection alliance of Paris came into existence, on the next steps to implement the Paris Agreement, and how the current geopolitical crises and conflicts are likely to influence global climate policy over the next few years.

**United Nations: History, Present, Future**

Centre Presentation in Duisburg Shopping Mall

The Centre and the VHS Duisburg (an adult education centre) together brought the United Nations circulating exhibition to Duisburg. The free public exhibition at the Duisburg Shopping Mall started on 8 February and lasts until 20 February 2017.

The exhibition has been created by the Federal Foreign Office as well as the United Nations Association of Germany on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the United Nations. It highlights the structures and important actors during the history of as well as contemporary challenges to the world organisation.

The exhibition brings a centrepiece of international politics to the people in Duisburg, and thus helps to bridge the gap between the global and the local.

**Earth System Governance: Confronting Complexity and Inequality**

Conference in Nairobi

In December, the Centre’s Senior Fellow Fariborz Zelli chaired the 2016 Conference on Earth System Governance in Nairobi, Kenya. The conference—the seventh in the conference series and the first one that took place in Africa—addressed the overarching theme of ‘Confronting Complexity and Inequality’ with a special focus on environmental governance research and about the continent. Over three days, researchers from all over the world presented and exchanged their cutting-edge research with the earth system governance community as well as policy makers and stakeholders with the aim to plan further cooperation.

The Earth System Governance Project is the largest social science research network in the area of governance and global environmental change. It takes up the challenge of exploring political solutions and novel, more effective governance mechanisms to cope with the current transitions in the biogeochemical systems of the planet with the aim to achieve sustainable development.

**End of Citizenship**

Workshop in Duisburg

Citizenship, and how it can be located within, between and beyond the state, has been strongly discussed since the ‘republican revival’ and the debates on cosmopolitan and radical democracy. At the same time, citizenship, claims to it and criticisms of it have become a key object in political and social struggles in many parts of the world. During this workshop, Andreas Niederberger of the University of Duisburg-Essen, among others, reviewed these developments and criticisms of the concept and discussed the future of theories of citizenship and/or theories of legitimacy/democratic theories attributing a major role to citizenship.
Competing Narratives
Conference in cooperation with Goethe Institute (among others) in Berlin
Do illiberal narratives exist in countries such as China, Germany, France, India, Poland, Russia, Turkey, and the USA, and what strategies are pursued with them? About 200 participants, including numerous international activists, artists and academics, will discuss the ‘Wettkampf von Erzählungen’/‘contest of narratives’ (Frank Gadinger) in the context of democracy, human rights, freedom of speech and expression, state interventions and encroachments, sexual orientation and gender, and flight and migration.

Future Scenarios of Global Cooperation: Practices and Challenges
Masterclass in Essen
Global problems, such as climate change, hunger or pandemic diseases, have increased the demand for coordination and cooperation. Global governance institutions, ever since the reports of the Club of Rome, have relied on expertise and forecasts to create policies which are appropriate for foreseeable and possibly unforeseeable challenges. Predicting, interpreting, and (what is most challenging) developing knowledge to change the future, are important tasks which scientists and others have set out to master. The future of cooperation rests on these visions of the future.

New Fellows and their research projects at the Centre

Prof. Dr. David Chandler
Legitimacy Crises and Public Protests

Dr. Ayse Cavdar
Political Anthropology of Religiosity in 'New Turkey'

Dr. Jon Hovi
Credible Commitments to Long-term Policy

Prof. Dr. Jonathan Joseph
Varieties of Resilience

Dr. Yannis Kallianos
Crisis, Legitimacy, and Social Contestation: The Everyday Politics of (De) Legitimation in Greece

Prof. Dr. Babacar Kanté
African Regionalism

Dr. Zeynep Sahin Mencutek
Refugee Governance, State and Politics in the Middle East

Prof. Dr. Detlef Sprinz
Credible Commitment to Long-Term Policy & Agent-Based Models of Climate Clubs

Dr. Winfried Veit
Prospective Migration Policy: Scenario Construction on the Relations between Europe and West Africa

SPECIAL
Scenario Building
Methods in Global Cooperation Research

International cooperation with regard to stabilisation and fair use of the global commons must take the time dimension into account, consider long-term effects of short-term decisions and develop cooperation packages that achieve desirable results, not least in order to prevent crisis dynamics. Scenarios based on Integrated Assessment Analysis (IAA) are complex and effective tools for predicting possible future trends. In climate research, they play a central role in modelling emission paths and their effects on global warming (WBGU 2014, p. 12, p. 19). IAA scenarios are also crucial for research on the transformation of the global energy system. They make it possible to depict different energy paths and their effects on emissions, global warming and investment costs. IAA scenarios also play a significant role in political processes and policy advice, e.g. in the context of climate negotiations. They make it possible to describe different development paths and their consequences. Political and technological transformation can thus be discussed and balanced against each other on the basis of IAA scenarios. At the same time, scenarios suggest having a certainty of ‘knowledge’ about future developments which the IAA’s methods may not be able to provide. While the combination of different energy sources, investment costs and emissions as well as the relationship between emission and earth warming effects can be modelled, the future depends to a large extent on social developments, the dynamics of which are hardly covered by the IAA scenarios. The significance and effects of governance structures, social centrifugal forces, social tipping points and unexpected events, e.g. the election of Donald Trump, are hardly acknowledged in an IAA analysis.

From the Concept of the Centre’s Masterclass in March 2017
The Centre’s Research Agenda is available on the Centre’s website (gcr21.org > research) for download (pdf). The conceptual basics of the agenda are visualised.

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