

Globalization and Multidisciplinary

Approaches to Research

Critical Perspectives from Humanities, Legal and Political Studies

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Introduction

Methodological questions are an everyday dilemma in academic research. Moreover, academic research seems not isolated with respect to globalization, but seriously involved in by studying it, and even influenced by it.

This editorial proposal by *Athena* stems from a reflection I originally had with some colleagues. In 2023, young International Law scholars organized a series of seminars on theories and approaches in the field, held among the Universities of Milano-Bicocca, Catholic of Sacred Heart and Milano “Statale”. In a mood in which positivism (typical of continental legal sciences) continuously emerged as the only way forward for some of the most experienced scholars invited to speak at these seminars, it seemed evident (at least to me) that the methodological issue, albeit questioned by a few speakers, had not been sufficiently explored in depth.

The methodological debate is not only relevant to this research area (which is also mine research area), but increasingly concerns research, education, dissemination of research and relations with other scholars and other fields of knowledge for different disciplines belonging to the humanities and social sciences sphere. It is even more relevant if we consider that this debate is now

part of a global context that has been strongly revolutionized in the last thirty years, influenced by globalization and its challenges, the relationships with other academic realities (not only geographically, but also scientifically distinct) and their constant mutual influence.

A debate, the one on methodology and globalization, which in this new thematic section of *Athena* we will try to explain in relation to the approach *on* globalization and *in* globalization, as a subject of research and cause of methodological evolution.

However, this will not be an exhaustive explanation. Though exhaustive and extensive as our efforts to narrate research methodology may be (together with research methodology as influenced by globalization), there are still unresolved issues, as well as missing voices, overlooked perspectives, and problems perhaps to be reconsidered in a broader perspective. The intention here is to propose a first multidisciplinary discussion on how globalization interacts with methodology of research and if there is a mutation on one or both sides.

Some definitional clarifications. In this foreword, I will use the expression “*field of knowledge*” as indicative of the macro-area of study (Legal studies, Political Sciences, Social Sciences, Humanities), while “*area of knowledge*” will indicate the specific ramification of study within the field (Public Law, Private Law...; Political Science, International Relations Theory, History of Political Thought...; Philosophy, History), and finally “*discipline*” will indicate the individual subject of study. This distinction is also useful for the distinction between the approaches (*intradisciplinary*, *interdisciplinary* and *multidisciplinary*) that I will make later.

1. Globalization Research Methodology

If we think about methodology and globalization, we cannot think (anymore) of two phenomena unrelated to each other. The influence that globalization has exerted in general not only on the political and economic levels, but also

on the cultural and social ones, has even reached scientific research in the Humanities (Yanitsky, 2017; Wolters, 2013) and in the Social, Legal and Economic studies (Civitarese Matteucci, 2014; Guedes and Faria, 2007; Morosini, 2005; Kennedy, 2003; Muchlinsky, 2003). This might seem obvious for those subjects that are immersed in globalization and global issues, studying them closely. However, this phenomenon has also begun to develop in matters traditionally distant from globalization. Think, for example, of Private Law. It is now increasingly seen in a transnational perspective, no longer only “localized” or about a specific legal culture but derive from the interaction between economic and private actors living in different national and cultural contexts or deal with topics somewhat distant from the traditional positivist debate, like sustainability (Morosini, 2005, 556 ff.; Kennedy, 2003, ff. 648). Or to the Historical and Philosophical studies, which increasingly have opened their research focus to global problems and change their research approaches (Yanitsky, 2017, 134 ff.), while they can also be decisive in identifying a *lingua franca* that can be used by all non-English-speaking scholars (Wolters, 2013, 8 ff.).

1.1 Globalization as an Object of Theoretical Research

Globalization can be understood, first, as an object of research. Research on globalization is characterized by being more phenomenological than analytical, more oriented to concrete manifestations than to formal abstractions. Therefore, globalization is the subject of research for what happens in it, how it develops, and how it influences other elements and even lived experiences.

The studies carried out in the last 30 years on phenomena of globalization and consequences have characterized both the research itself and the way in which they interact with the main subject of research, i.e. norms, policies, economic or social effects, and the historical implications that have brought or derive from it. Very often, the use of the term “globalization” has been contested by scholars, while some claimed that its meaning has been left

unclarified (Muchlinski, 2003, 221); other times, it has been considered as a movement that has inspired other processes (Civitarese Matteucci, 2014, 128; Kennedy, 2003, which also distinguishes various phases of globalization in the methodology of legal sciences). However, globalization remains a phenomenon studied as a whole; it is the subject of research that simultaneously involves different perspectives, different fields of knowledge, and even different areas within these.

It follows that globalization can be seen as a set of perspectives studying the same phenomena, though not necessarily willingly interacting with each other. In this, we see how the same subject of study can have the same implications or can lead to similar conclusions for different fields of study. For example, the study of certain political declarations at the international level is relevant both from a political point of view¹ and from a legal one.²

However, this raises a first question: do scientists from each perspective study globalization from the lens of the methodologies typical of their specific field of knowledge, or do they also bear in mind other, different scientific perspectives, approaches, and methodologies as well applicable to the subject?

Methodology brings forth two significant steps forward in its application. The first is to obtain reliable *information to develop a thought consistent* with one's own area of knowledge. Through methodological application, it is therefore possible *to theorize* (i.e. study and elaborate on) the globalization and its phenomena and understand them. Indeed, this step is the decisive one to understand whether the research methodology may be suitable for studying certain phenomena, or whether it provides incomplete information, or a reduced view of reality, and finally, whether it should be set up again (among many see: Corten, 2024, 11 ff.; Lieblich, 2021).

¹ By evaluating the political implications that follow from having expressed a given statement.

² By assuming both the form of an expression of an *opinio juris sive necessitatis* and a condition from which certain legal effects on international relations arise.

One of the problematic aspects that immediately emerges here is related to the immanence of dogmatism on the theoretical approach (Wight, 2021, 443 f.). The ability of every scholar of globalization derives first from how lofty and profound his thought is, how great is the doctrinal experience that they himself lived, how they received such previous knowledge and how they use it. Indeed, one of the relevant aspects of the methodology remains precisely to understand how much one adheres to the previous approaches, and how much one deviates from them, as we will see below.

The second step forward is related to the *objective that this development of thought intends to pursue*. In this case, the methodological application will also assure that there is a selection of the information gathered in the analysis, much of which is purposely expunged by the applied methodology. A possible purpose of the development could be the advancement in the scientific thought in the field. If the objective coincides with this theoretical advancement, then it is possible that the given information is relevant for the specific field of knowledge.

On the contrary, an objective aimed at evolving the methodology to generate awareness of the phenomena of globalization in other users (other than scholars in its own scientific community) will also have to consider information that is not immediately relevant to one's own field of knowledge (in this sense, Civitarese Matteucci, 2014, 121). A jurist who intends to study global governance will not only be able to rely only on legal data, but also on political and economic ones, and must be able in this case to allow the elaboration of a broader and more coherent analysis of the phenomenon.

With this premise, it becomes necessary to study globalization and its phenomena using different approaches, different perspectives and different methodological tools, to prevent certain analyses from remaining anchored only to one's own area or field of knowledge.

1.2 Approaches in Methodology within and from Outside the Field of Knowledge

Methodology must thus be accompanied by the approach, i.e. the way in which it is used and obtains the information necessary for one's study and analysis. The approach determines what information will be relevant and what possible scientific evidence will be highlighted. From this point of view, each subject has different approaches. For example, in the legal field the positivist approach will recognize relevance only to legal data, while the critical approach will try to consider these elements also in a broader context (i.e. historical, political, or economic context; on this point, see Taekema and Van der Burg, 2024).

However, at this point a fundamental problem arises. *Does studying globalization through one approach or another also change the research methodology?* The methodological question appears to be relevant, especially in those cases in which one is confronted not only with approaches and methodologies typical of its own scientific field but also investigates the relationship with others. Here, different types of approach are decisive for investigating the subject of study (globalization) as a whole and properly explain it in a scientific way.

Moreover, we can talk about three types of general approach to the methodology. The first is the approach that we could call "*intradisciplinary*". The prefix *intra-* in this case is rendered precisely for its intrinsic value, i.e. an approach aimed at relating different areas, or different disciplines, of the same field of knowledge, whose fragmentation is only apparent. The different areas have a general methodology given by common practice in knowledge, i.e. the study of a legal, political, economic, social, historical or philosophical datum. From these data, we find elements that can be discussed by the same scholars within the same field of knowledge. The difference between these areas does not lie in the methodology itself, but in the content of the data that may be relevant for the development of the research. For example, in International Law the intradisciplinary difference can be detected between

disciplines like International environmental law and International law of armed conflict; another example could consider the study of different period of History; or also the difference between International Relations theory and Political science.

Following this, the second approach, the “*interdisciplinary*” one, relies on the functional subdivision that allows the study of a given datum with methodologies that differ only in the focal point of departure. This is the case, for example, of the distinction between Domestic law, Comparative law and International law, or the divide between Public and Private law. There is also a distinction between Global contemporary history and History of economy; or also a distinction between Political and Social sciences. The functionality of this subdivision is only referable to the *focus each scholar gives to its study* of the considered subject. Therefore, the methodological differences would be more relevant in considering how a subject has evolved differently from the others and has characterized itself around a research methodology.³

A different interpretation (Budtz Pedersen, 2016) sees *interdisciplinarity* as an element that unites contiguous fields of knowledge, but which do not share the same methodology. This consideration is acceptable especially for areas of knowledge which share some methodological elements with contiguous areas of another field of knowledge (for example, the global phenomenon shared between Geography, Contemporary History and Political Studies). Furthermore, this allows us to see similarities in the adopted methodology, as can be seen in the lack of significant divergences in the approach of scientific thought within the same field of knowledge.⁴

³ For legal subjects, however, the difference relates above all to the type of normative sources that are studied: constitutional sources, the sources of criminal law, civil law... those of international law. Therefore, the source is the *starting point* from which the methodological difference between the different legal subjects emanates.

⁴ Budtz Pedersen, 2016, in fact, indicates this element about the relationship between the Humanities and the Social Sciences. A similar approach was also expressed at the International Congress on Interdisciplinarity in Social and Human Sciences (5-6 May 2016), held at the University of the Algarve.

On the other hand, the theme of this editorial section tries to highlight a third approach, in which there are subjects that deal with the study of a given object from positions that may appear specular. Hence, it is a matter of evaluating how the *multidisciplinary* approach can be considered relevant for the study of phenomena related to globalization and how these always present multiple perspectives, distant only by the lack of pure methodological sharing (van Gestel, Micklitz and Poiares-Maduro, 2013, 12).

The idea, in this case, can be represented in the following way. Let's say there is a table (a round one), on which an object is placed and around which several scholars sit; they belong to different fields and areas of knowledge. Each of these scholars observes the object from his own perspective and communicates to the others what he sees. Practically speaking, they do so based on the thought and methodologies of the field of knowledge to which they belong. By characterizing the different perspectives because of one's perception and knowledge, the descriptions of the object will be different for some points, but specular, and even overlapping, for others. Therefore, the multidisciplinary approach aims to put different perspectives of a given phenomenon "around the same table", study it in depth and understand its totality.

Indeed, this approach provides also elements of study in another way. When the different people who observe the object from their own perspective report what they see, each of them can grasp the data communicated by the others and rework their perspective, highlighting details otherwise excluded or had been ignored for their own *mindset*. Multidisciplinarity also works in this way, allowing one to "open" one's observation even to hidden details, or details that may be significant to describe the object in a different way (Janaki, 2021; Pandey, 2011, 47-48). Finally, multidisciplinarity is *confrontation* with fundamental entailed problems, especially in relation to those fields of knowledge that have developed methodologies quickly consolidated and that are also dogmatically preserved (Pandey, 2011, 49).

If the same object of study can be methodologically seen from different perspectives, the juxtaposition of the same also allows us to highlight how there can be an influence or *cross-fertilization* providing food for thought and hinting further studies. This may be the case of the critical approaches applied to certain issues, which makes it possible to detect how different elements of a given phenomenon (for example, legal and historical data) reflect the very essence of the phenomenon, its complexity (Jarrick, Myrdal and Wallenberg-Bondesson, 2016).⁵

Although the sum of the parts does not give the totality, it is also true that the essence of this sum lies precisely in the comparison that the various perspectives, as parts of the totality, weave with each other, amalgamating. The multidisciplinary approach acts as a glue between the different perspectives, allowing a direct comparison between them and consolidating their relationship, to provide an overall and complete analysis and response to the phenomena of globalization.

1.3 Multidisciplinarity as an Element of Heterodoxy in the Research Methodology?

One of the questions that may arise in relation to this topic concerns the relationship between multidisciplinarity and the methodologies proper to each field of knowledge. Does applying multidisciplinarity make the methodology heterodox with respect to the traditional one (as applied in that field of knowledge), or instead is this research approach the result of the orthodoxy of the methodology itself?

We must first of all clarify what we mean by these two terms, to avoid the misunderstanding that we are not talking here about methodology as a “religious belief” (and therefore we do not assume that dogmatism is a

⁵ Also having to consider that legal, political and socio-economic doctrine mainly study phenomena and facts caused by actors other than scholars (i.e. States, supranational organizations and groups of private actors), it is logical to consider that the choice to create that act, provoke that phenomenon or give rise to that fact is the result of different instruments of action of these actors.

“belief” in itself), but only as a research approach that can be more or less shared within a given field or area of knowledge. As the terms suggest, the prefixes *hetero-* and *ortho-* indicate how close you are and how much you adhere to the δόξα (*doxa*, opinion) commonly accepted in the scientific community of reference (van Gestel, Micklitz and Poiares-Maduro, 2013, 18), and how much the approach to be considered can deviate from the *doxa* itself or consolidate it, keep it straight.

Furthermore, the idea is that a given methodology can be adherent to this opinion, and so more or less accepted by the scientific community (van Gestel, Micklitz and Poiares-Maduro, 2013, 20). If the applied methodology is shared only in part or only by a few people, a shared view may form among members of that community that that applied methodology is “minority” or “not widely practiced”. This is a conviction resembling the one that religious communities expose to those who do not adhere to the rite or have a different belief from the one widely practiced. Thus, we enter a mechanism of dogmatic adherence to the orthodox methodology, which takes on the traits of an exclusivist approach and aims at sharing knowledge (and persevering in that methodology) only among those who adhere to the majority opinion.

This approach – which is extremely simplified and fails to grasp all the facets of the scientific knowledge shared in every community – does not look at scientific thought as a preserver of epistemological truth (and therefore going to bother Platonic philosophy), but only as *a starting parameter for subsequent development*, in a collective or individual manner. Hence, if *orthodoxia* remains the approach most consistent with the thought commonly shared within the scientific community, then we can consider that, similarly to concentric circles, everyone’s thought and approach is closer or more distant to the main *doxa*, that is, to the commonly accepted opinion. This aspect, in turn, determines that, in reality, the perspectives furthest from orthodoxy are not totally wrong, useless or even unsustainable, but only that they can be “tested” (in the Galilean sense) by the method developed within a broader community (*global*, we could say, contrary to the *parochial* or *local*

one, which remains the first with which scholars are confronted). It can even constitute the basis for a coherent development of the most accepted opinion.

The issue is seen by the most recent doctrine in a twofold way, especially in the field of social sciences. The relationship between heterodoxy and orthodoxy can be seen both from the point of view of the *group of scholars* (the scientific community, we could argue), which sets the minimum parameters for accepting theses developed by individual academics in the field (Smith, 2025, 1119 ff., a 1126 ff.). Or it can be seen from the point of view of the *individual scholars*, who thus believes that their approach must be differentiated from the scientific community of reference (Arfaoui, 2020). In other words, they tend to develop a perspective “out of the box” of the scientific community of reference.

In the first case, heterodoxy is seen from a collective point of view, or even, we could call it, from within the field of research itself. In this sense, the scholars who set the parameters test the statements, opinions, research and their results through an evaluation of the used method. One of these parameters, for example, is linked to what the most recent doctrine identifies as “*scholar-activism*” (Smith, 2025, 1126), i.e. the normativism of scholars emphasizing through the conduct of their research (e.g., with the intent to influence public debate on a given issue, or by stimulating political reforms), distinguishing it from the mere “desire to inform” or a desire to contribute to the scientific progress of their field.

In some cases, the desire to develop a certain scientific thought leads to clashing with the prevailing opinion, and in this case, *orthodoxia* will try to reason in terms of openness (progressivism) or closure (conservatism) with respect to the idea advocated. However, there are difficulties in giving a uniform evaluation of heterodox scientific thought. These may depend on

factors of a subjective nature,⁶ of a real scientific nature,⁷ and even of academic corporatism or dogmatism.⁸ In some cases, this dogmatism even goes so far as to ostracize “rebel” scholars who do not accept such parameters for the evaluation of their research (Wight, 2021, 444).

The proposed solution can be *ecumenical* (Smith, 2025, 1128), through which the proposed critique of previous scientific thought is in turn open and allows the different perspectives to be collected in a single discussion, reuniting them and finding a common solution (or a compromise). But the solution can also be that of a *coexistence of several scientific approaches*, which in fact allows us to have not only the possibility of moving between several of them (even looking for the right tool to use to decipher a given phenomenon), but also a scientific competition between them (Smith, 2025, 1128). This aspect is relevant not only by virtue of the evolution of the method within a given field, but can also be decisive in what, we will see, is the current battle of scientific research, namely the funding of research projects (among many, Peat and Rose, 2023).

On the other hand, in the heterodox perspective as put forward by the individual scholar, the focus of the theory is on a specific school of thought. However, even in the context of detecting whether there is some *heterodoxia*, it also becomes crucial to understand other issues. What is the attitude of the individual scholar with respect to the covered topics? What may be the sensitivity to dogmatic openings? What are the relationships existing with the other members of the scientific community of reference, up to the personal character of each one and the ability to know how to develop theories not limited to the time and context in which they are included?

⁶ By including the sensitivity of individual scholars towards openness.

⁷ By reasoning based both on commonly accepted parameters and on the dogmatic conviction that certain theories must reflect the thought of past scholars.

⁸ Where one can also include some bad practices, such as self-citation, or the citation among colleagues, and conversely the exclusion of scholars from different geographical areas or different academic traditions

This aspect is, in fact, perhaps the most difficult to study, since it also depends on the “academic strength” that the person possesses (depending, for example, on the freedom to develop research that the area of knowledge, the community and even the department or research centre allow him), but also on how much his or her research is studied, examined, applied in the reasoning by other scholars, inside and outside the scientific community of reference.

Hence, the multidisciplinary approach, for a long time, has been limited to the perspective of the individual scholar.⁹ The scientific innovation that could be achieved through the study of new methodologies and approaches, as well as by “influencing” the typical methodologies of one’s own areas of knowledge with those of other areas (as in the case of the school of critical social studies), depended on the sensitivity of single scholars and their willingness to venture beyond common scientific thought. A sort of *curiositas* that has also allowed the development of original and innovative ideas and results.

In recent years, the issue has also shown itself as a problem to be solved at the scientific community level. On one hand, it should be noted that multidisciplinary has made it possible to develop a new thought in relation to certain phenomena relevant to one’s own area of knowledge.¹⁰ On the other hand, we continuously need to underline the relationship between a given knowledge, multidisciplinary and globalization to develop a proper methodology of research.

⁹ Compared to an initial period, where methodological evolution led to the differentiation of the disciplines and areas of knowledge (and even more originally, to the diversification of the fields of knowledge), the subsequent phase has experienced a general evolution in the method of individual scientific sectors, as well as changes in terms of research and study of the topics. A general digression can be found in Feyerabend, 1979, 199 (cited by Corten, 2024, 7).

¹⁰ As in the case of the internet, social media and new technologies, studied first by computer and communication scholars, then also by jurists, economists, mathematicians: see the article by Korhonen in this issue

2. Research Methodology in Globalization: How Methodological Perspectives Change

If the methodology of research on globalization has seen the contribution of multidisciplinary as decisive in opening the different fields of knowledge, it is important to note how this methodology is also located *in* globalization and is subjected to its effects. Nevertheless, this has been in turn conditioned not only in the setting of thought, but also in the methods of drafting, producing, disseminating and dialoguing about the scientific results.

In fact, globalization, as a socio-political and economic process, influences not only the subjects of study (policies, norms, social phenomena) but also conditions the way in which we, as scholars, approach them in general. When approaching to these subjects, the scholars could develop a new sensitivity to them or even could modify their own approach by comparing different level of knowledge. Therefore, globalization changes the very thinking of those who propose their research, making it accessible to a wider audience; it can also influence it by linking it to means (and not just methodologies) that can strongly influence fruition, understanding and even intention, being them even a merely informative and popular medium.

2.1 Methodology in Globalization and Change of Research Perspective

Globalization influences first the focus that every scholar activates with respect to a given object of research, which also include influence by acknowledging new theories and approaches present in global studies. This influence, aside from determining a changing in perspective, could also aid the scholars in developing new kinds of research and elaborate further their studies.

This is especially the case of the scientific consciousness developed by critical, Third-Worldist and feminist studies (respectively, in the legal field see: Kennedy, 2006; Anghie, 2005; Bartlett, 1989). With a view to making

scholars and regulators¹¹ more aware of a given problem present in the real and global context, these studies have developed methodologies aimed at underlining aspects present in each context (being it historical, political, economic, or social). In this way, the proposed idea is also to look at the foundations that led to the creation of that concept, criticizing them and opening them up to determine a different perspective. This reasoning applies as much to legal norms as to policies and moral precepts that condition a given community.

A similar situation has also occurred in the Humanities, which have developed “transhumanistic” studies referring to the spreading phenomenon of artificial intelligence and its ethical and moral implications. Or in International Law, with the “transcivilization” theory relating to the identification of principles, values and rules commonly shared by all cultures of the world, beyond the classic regional or traditional Euro- and American-centric visions (Onuma, 2017).

2.2 Globalization and New Users of Scientific Research

Furthermore, globalization affects the target audience of scientific thought (and its products, as we will see shortly). This is no longer destined only to colleagues in the scientific community, but also at other subjects, “laymen”, non-experts in the field and not academics, and those who can further develop influence to interact with reality. This, for example, has increasingly involved non-academic users from different backgrounds, such as indigenous communities, businesses, and civil society, to also get out of the usual binomial between the politico-legal and academic community.

Thus, scientific knowledge changes its form, adapts its language, pursues ends that are not only epistemological, but conditions the reader and can also determine a change in the current situation. Hence, the goal is to advance an

¹¹ By this expression, we mean, in a broad sense, all those who have the power to establish rules, not only of a legislative type, but also of a moral and even scientific one.

idea of the scientific community not as a separate and distant entity from the rest of the world, but an integral part of it and, above all, a necessary mechanism to move ideas and considerations.

2.3 Globalization and New Objects of Research: From the Classical Approach to Current Phenomena

Scientific research looks at phenomena. Globalization could be considered as a set of phenomena that must be studied from different points of view. However, the problem here is that those phenomena can be considered unanalysable if one adopts only a traditional approach or methodology of study (as in the case of the positivist approach and theories).

Hence, scholars also change their focus and their research approach in relation to the type of phenomenon they are studying, passing not through the abstract elements typical of their subject matter, but through more concrete, current element of interest even for the non-academic world. This results in a more phenomenal and topical study (for International Law see: Burri, 2025; Hakimi, 2025), in which different knowledges must be applied and adapted to the phenomenon itself, in order to making discrepancies and coherence rising up from the analysis. In this, it is evident that a methodology aimed at considering singularly socio-political, legal, economic and historical elements will hardly be able to fully understand new, unexpected and otherwise indiscernible phenomena.

This consideration also allows us to question how the methodology can be adapted to methods that are not typically used in that scientific field. This is the case of quantitative and experimental research approaches, commonly used in the Statistical and Mathematical Sciences, but less considered in the Humanities and Social Sciences, and which can also highlight clearly different (and no less relevant) results than the qualitative approach alone, i.e. based on the type of data and source considered (in this issue, see the article by Wallenberg-Bondesson; on the contrary, Lentner, 2019).

2.4 *Globalization and Research Media: New Tools and New Sharing of Scientific Knowledge*

Globalization influences research methodology and opens to multidisciplinary also by using new tools, both in relation to the performance of research and its dissemination and sharing.

In the first case, research is mainly influenced by accessibility to these tools, as in the case of doctrinal writings and political-legal documents that are themselves the subject of research. There is also the consideration of the tools used to do research, which in the academic world have undergone a clear transformation, first with the advent of the internet, then with the use of artificial intelligence to integrate the processes of learning and research development. Although it seems trivial, it is nevertheless necessary to underline how much of scientific thought is conditioned by this aspect, which leads independent scholars not to always be up to the dogmatic level of the affiliated ones, supported by a university, a department or a research centre.

In the second case, the sharing of scientific research is influenced by globalization of the tools of dialogue, explanation, education and sharing that are different from the traditional methods of sharing academic research, i.e. the publication of monographs, collections and articles in scientific journals. Nevertheless, multidisciplinary can play a decisive role, not only because more and more dissemination tools seem to proliferate that revolve around certain concepts and not the subjects themselves (as in the case of several academic blogs, both generally and topically-focused), but also because there are scientific debates bringing together (and in a more flexible way) perspectives that can be opened more easily for analysing a given phenomenon from several points of view. *Symposia* increase the capacity for dialogue between scholars, and platforms (blogs, webinars) and other useful and suitable tools are also needed to support this dialogue.

Hence, globalization also makes it possible to develop a scientific dialogue through tools that were previously only seen as extraneous to the scientific dissemination, while today they are the norm for many scholars. Furthermore,

a greater and immediate diffusion of one's own thought allows a theoretical development of the scientific question.

2.5 The Hard Methodological Test in the Globalization of Knowledge: The Financing of Research and its Dissemination

Finally, the previously mentioned problems are also associated with common denominators that now condition the world of research “globally speaking”. These denominators are identified in *the funding of research*, strictly related to dissemination (or how much is broad the general knowledge of the work of researcher).

Funding is certainly the current most relevant aspect for academics, generating a growing “*need to survive*” for scholars. On this point, it becomes evident that research in one's field of expertise is no longer just the “basic” one, i.e. related to the study and drafting of papers (with the immanence of the academic commandment “to publish or to perish”, leading also to consider articles as “commodity”, both for the scholar and for the department to which he belongs: Castiel, Sanz-Valero, 2007). There is also applied research, trying to propose studies to be developed innovatively and originally, aimed at providing further food for thought, and based on “scholar-activism”. Moreover, studies and projects must be oriented towards purposes other than mere dissemination to the scientific community: they must be able to influence the external reader, and they must also be able to support practical and concrete reasoning to solve complex and current problems.

This leads to considering scientific research as a cog that moves a more complex engine. Thus, if the mechanism is not constantly “greased” (i.e. supported by adequate funding), if the transmission mechanism does not evolve (providing more perspectives and more solutions brought to the community of people), ideas cannot advance on their own, and culture itself ends up remaining anchored to opinions that are no longer current and not suitable for examining new phenomena affecting everyone's life.

However, the funding of scientific research also encounters significant *changes in the method of evaluating projects*, to consider how oriented they are to achieve that goal. In recent years (in the last fifteen, at least), projecting has encountered several limits imposed when structuring a funding proposal. This aspect, in fact, has been seen above all in the context of European funding, and partly in national ones. For example, Horizon 2030 and European Research Council funding also have multidisciplinary research approach among their evaluation criteria.¹² At the same time, some national funding schemes (such as the Dutch¹³ and Italian¹⁴ ones) have experimented or are directly experimenting with the prevalence of projects that are as multidisciplinary as possible, not only oriented to their own area or field of knowledge, but also open to perspectives outside these.

Scholarship has investigated (albeit in some cases only from its own perspective) this phenomenon and has also tried to understand whether the multidisciplinary approach had really become a necessity or was only an added value. For example, Peat and Rose (2023), starting from the amount of funding projects on Legal Studies as approved by the Dutch Research Council between 2002 and 2020, pointed out that the evaluation of the submitted projects depended on various factors, including the social impact of the project, the possibility for the scholar to remain in the Dutch academy and to be able to continue carrying out that research (Peat and Rose, 2023, 10-11).

¹² With regard to Horizon 2020, it is the European Commission itself that clarifies that interdisciplinarity (here understood in a broad sense, also as multidisciplinary) is an *essential component* of the projects to be developed, because it allows for the integration of different methods, approaches and perspectives (<https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/support/f-aq;keywords=/935>). For ERC funding, the difference concerns *above all the excellence of the project* itself, but that for the most part complex problems can be brilliantly addressed and solved with scientific complexity, and therefore also here with interdisciplinarity (especially in Synergy and Plus Grants, which allow to finance projects that look beyond the traditional field of research of the scholar: <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/ERC-2026-PLUS>).

¹³ Funding from the Dutch Research Council (*Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek – NWO*).

¹⁴ Funding allocated by the Ministry of University and Research (MUR) through various schemes, including now the Projects of Relevant National Interest (PRIN) and the Italian Science Fund (FIS).

Further, the two scholars pointed out how the approval of projects over time had moved from the consideration of purely doctrinal research to research that also took into consideration interdisciplinarity or multidisciplinary (Peat and Rose, 2022, 6).

This research made possible to hypothesize two conclusions. The first is that interdisciplinarity had gone from added value to a necessity in researching, especially in the legal field. The second is that many scholars “eliminated” themselves from the selection, by avoiding presenting projects of purely doctrinal research or methodologically anchored to orthodox schemes of their subject, or even by evaluating difficulties for themselves to open their research to other knowledges (Peat and Rose, 2023, 11) and, in somewhat manner, in the difficulties in finding scholars from other fields available to be part of the project.

This issue is not only related to a particular field of knowledge or area in which doing research. In the global context, research funding also depends on how much the funding body (very often governmental) believes that the proposed research can be performative or even manages to guarantee a return in macroeconomic terms (Butler and Mulgan, 2013). This also involves considering how, in turn, funding can influence research, its development, duration and the employed method (Thelwall, Simrick, Viney and Van den Besselaar, 2023). At that point, it is also possible to determine, empirically, how research and multidisciplinary can coexist, especially to ensure that the former remains in the long term and is also successful in methodological development.

Hence, depending also by funding opportunities, scientific research has ended up assimilating multidisciplinary as a decisive criterion for evaluating the feasibility of a project. This has led to understand how far the project can be developed, if it can guarantee the participation of several scholars coming from different fields of knowledge, and can also have a beneficial impact on the methodological evolution in that field or area.

3. Summary of the Papers in this Issue

Beyond these digressions, the articles of the eminent scholars published in this issue open or revise some perspectives on the method and study of certain phenomena of globalization, in a doctrinal and non-doctrinal key. The selection proposed here seeks to look above all at the multidisciplinary issue and globalization within and from outside the Legal Sciences.

The article by Sanne Taekema and Wibren van der Burg opens the thematic section, proposing a critical reading of the relationship between legal-positivist doctrine and the study of the phenomena of globalization. The authors believe that the opening of the method to a “*law-in-context*” approach is the optimal key to better understand the mentioned phenomena.

Maria Wallenberg Bondesson’s article, on the other hand, looks at scientific research in the legal field from an external perspective, and investigates and discusses the use of quantitative, comparative methods in Legal History. The current trend of internationalisation of research, as well as an increased focus on inter- and multidisciplinary, would seem to make such methods more relevant. However, the author’s quantitative survey of recent research shows that quantitative (and quantitative comparative) methods can still be very rare in Legal History. Against this background, she argues for the benefits of such studies, and concludes that quantitative research could legitimately play a greater role in the area.

From an analysis level *on* globalization, we move on to two articles that investigate the phenomena *in* globalization.

The article by Outi Korhonen and Jari Ala-Ruona investigates the impact of interdisciplinarity (broadly understood) on methodological studies in International Law scholarship, when dealing with topics which are shared with other field of studies, like emerging technologies, block-chain, AI and more. They argue that globalization constitutes a necessary element to which international legal scholars must confront for evolving their methodologies.

Finally, Gustavo Gozzi's article takes up a great classic of international legal doctrinal thought, namely the question of the Eurocentrism of International Law, trying to examine it both in the light of critical approaches (especially TWAIL ones), and in a transcivilizationist key, taking up the theories of Onuma Yasuaki and applying them also to understand the current tension in international order.

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