

## Evolution of international research cooperation models in the contemporary foreign policy environment

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**EVOLUTION  
OF INTERNATIONAL  
RESEARCH COOPERATION  
MODELS  
IN THE CONTEMPORARY  
FOREIGN POLICY  
ENVIRONMENT**

**I. Zhukovsky\***



*This article focuses on the principle models of international research and academic cooperation. The author divides international academic cooperation into periods and analyses the evolution of the connection between foreign policy and international cooperation in education and research aimed at raising the prestige and improving the position of a state in the international arena. The author focuses on the non-linear nature of periods stemming from the fact that different states are characterized by different (non-linear) time cycles resulting from the differences in cultural and historical backgrounds and dissimilar foreign policy contents and formats. Through comparing a variety of foreign policy approaches (including that of the Russian Federation), the author answers the question about the contribution of universities to the development of mechanisms of cooperation and mutual understanding in the modern world — a world increasingly influenced by information and communication technologies.*

*Key words:* international academic and research cooperation, foreign policy, internationalization of education and research

Undoubtedly, international research and academic partnership constitute an integral part of modern international relations and foreign policy; they are instrumental in reaching foreign policy objectives of both expanding academic presence in the key regions and developing educational services exports to the areas of strategic interest [2, p. 68]. As a rule, influential universities with top positions in international rankings (as well as the academic system in general) are another integral characteristic of a successful state, along with cultural experience and social capital attractive to both external users and internal consumers.

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In foreign policy, enhancing and securing positions has always been accompanied by cultural, educational, and business expansion. The issue of balancing business and state interests in foreign policy is a major one, but in this article we will only focus on analysing the practices of increasing academic presence in certain regions and states that is in line with the current foreign policy agenda of major political actors. Apparently, states striving to maximise their influence accumulate various resources, including that of academic partnership, within the priority areas of their foreign policies. Thus, correlation between the interests of the state and other structures directly or indirectly supporting foreign policy interests is a very important issue. The most prestigious and influential international academic centres (universities, corporate institutes, research centres) are striving to establish and enhance academic reputation, to attract talented applicants and employees from other regions, and to secure new technologies and intellectual resources [1; 3; 5; 9].

The conflict in the Ukraine, as well as concurrent dramatic events unfolding in the other hotspots of the world, catalysed a discussion about the revival of state-centred model of international politics. One can often hear how most of notorious 'new actors' boasting 'universal values' turned out to be rather loyal tools of states, whereas the logic behind their actions as international nongovernmental and non-profit organisations, as well as transnational corporations, is governed by that of 'parent states'. This also holds true for the inner workings of the global (international) media.

Of course, partners in international academic cooperation also follow foreign policy paradigms of their 'parent states' and contribute to the implementation of their respective foreign policy agendas in the host regions. Therefore, a rational line of behaviour for states is *securing the strongest possible academic presence* in the priority regions, and, for partners in international academic cooperation, to *rigorously follow* the parent state's foreign policy vectors. This idea is supported by an analysis of priority foreign policy areas of both the most economically developed states (G20) and countries striving to secure their position in the international arena as points of growth and global intellectual resources attraction.

International cooperation has become an integral part of academic culture. It has quickly (historically speaking) evolved from collaboration through correspondence and sporadic personal contacts between leading professors pursuing purely scientific and academic goals to comprehensive partnership and networking programmes guided by common goals and missions, all the way up to establishing international universities and global open educational programmes. Based on a retrospective analysis of international academic cooperation in the context of the 20<sup>th</sup> century world politics, this article answers the question about 'turning point' events marking the beginnings of new periods in the development of international dimension of science and education instigated by world politics. The non-linear movement through milestones of the states unique cultural and historical experience and different foreign policy agendas and styles has become increasingly important.

**The first stage (institutes of internalization)** was marked by the emergence of specialised national institutions supporting mobility and internationalisation — for instance, the German Academic Exchange Service (Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst, DAAD) which resumed its operation in 1950 after the World War II. This was the beginning of a new era of rapidly accelerating internationalisation and integration of education. It is worth mentioning that the DAAD project was launched in 1925 as a purely academic effort in response to the dramatic increase of the demand for cooperation tools — mobility financing and joint research financing mechanisms — from both internal and external academic agents.

Agencies specialising in enhancing international research and academic presence are established by states with very different foreign policy models — from the enforcers of ‘global responsibility’ (USA) to those focused on developing a compact subregion (Sweden). Relevant information is systematised in Table 1.

The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) provides a good example for analysing the mission of international academic cooperation. Following the political decision on developing contacts with France, DAAD started to perceive itself as a mechanism for new German academic, educational, and cultural presence in the new (post-war) world. In the early 1960s, focusing on the most powerful players in post-war European politics, DAAD encouraged foreign policy contacts with the countries across the geopolitical divide. In 1958, DAAD launched research and academic exchange programmes with Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary.

In the 1970s, universities of different countries started offering double degree programmes. The programmes’ participants either followed a jointly developed curriculum at a host university or commuted between two universities.

**The next stage (international universities)** was to establish international universities, i. e. those located in host jurisdictions but maintaining not only national but also international standards, either global or those of the ‘parent state’. Such universities (research and education centres) were founded during the fall of bipolar system of world politics. They were an important result of international political agreements, a consequence of foreign policies and — in rare cases — commercial projects. It is important to stress that most commercial projects in new educational jurisdictions focused on business education (different models of business schools are not to be considered in this study).

The most successful examples of such institutions are the so called ‘American’ and ‘German’ universities established to secure an apparent international political and cultural presence. German universities are financed either directly by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (for instance, the Andrassy University in Budapest) or by a donor pool bringing together financial and industrial groups (or associated funds) that have economic interests in this region.

Agencies specialising in research and academic cooperation development

Name	Country	Established	Key areas	Website
DAAD	Germany	1950 (1925)	Awarding scholarships for foreigners to study or conduct research in Germany; internationalisation of universities; promotion of the German language and German studies; cooperation with developing countries	www.daad.de
Campus France	France	Egide — education mobility operator — was established in France in 1960	Disseminating information on educational programmes from bachelor degree to postdoctoral studies, as well as on scholarships and grants, in France	www.campusfrance.org
American Councils	USA	1974	Holding competitions for foreign school, graduate, and postgraduate students, teachers, researchers, and specialists for studying, conducting research, and participating in academic exchange in the USA.	www.americancouncils.org
National Institute for International Education	Republic of Korea	1962	Providing educational opportunities for Koreans living abroad, promoting international academic cooperation, supporting foreign students studying in Korea, etc.	www.niied.go.kr
Swedish Institute	Sweden	1945	Studying the cultures and peoples of other countries, disseminating information about Sweden and its culture	www.si.se
British Council	UK	1948	Developing educational opportunities and cultural ties, creating international educational opportunities for young people from the UK and other countries	www.britishcouncil.in

An analysis of German politics in these regions and the focus of scholarships, research, and cooperation programmes from DAAD and other funds make it possible to speak of a well-coordinated combination of business interests of German financial and industrial groups, political activities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and international academic presence (Table 2).

Emerging international universities, naturally, drew on the experience of overcoming animosity between the French and German societies after two world wars. This proved that integration projects for youth, cultural, and academic exchange could be effective tools of creating the atmosphere of good neighbourhood and mutual understanding. The universities became the focus of the most significant integration efforts. Academic corporations were perceived as carriers of collective memory, factors of national idea consolidation, and institutes with the greatest intellectual influence.

At the same time, an analysis of the presence of American universities (table 3), and, more specifically, the geography of new educational initiatives launched on the ruins of bipolar world or in the 'frozen conflict' zones, speaks of a combination of securing symbolical presence and developing new centres of influence.

Talks of the need to strengthen Russian academic presence abroad have been going on over the past several years. Its key aspects are listed on the website of the Russian International Affairs Council ([www.russiancouncil.ru](http://www.russiancouncil.ru)). A number of political statements to this effect were made by both the president of the country [6] and the officials from the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation [10]. The Russian Government issued a decree to accelerate the process of entering global research and education markets [7].

Although cooperation in research, technology, and education has traditionally been viewed as good manners in dealing with the CIS countries, maintaining and developing cooperation in research, science, and education to the benefit of the defence industry and Russia's defence potential was the key element of such contacts. [11]. Due to the lack of a systemic long-term solution for promoting cooperation in research and education through creating a network of international universities, an alternative decision was made aimed at supporting new branches of Russian public and private universities, primarily in the CIS countries. To this end, the Agreement on the Creation and Functioning of University Branches in the Member States of the Customs Union Agreement and the Common Economic Space was signed on May 23, 2000. The Agreement participants are the Republic of Belarus, Republic of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Russian Federation, and the Republic of Tajikistan. Moreover, Russia initiated the signing of another policy document, the Agreement on the Procedure of Creating and the Functioning of University Branches in the CIS countries on September 28, 2001. The Agreement came into force in 2001 for the Republic of Armenia, Republic of Belarus, Kyrgyz Republic, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, and Republic of Tajikistan. A separate contract was signed by the Government of the Russian Federation and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on creation and the functioning of Russian universities in Ukraine and Ukrainian universities in Russia (March 3, 2003).

**German international universities in different regions of the world**

Name	Country	Established	Key areas	Website
German University in Cairo (GUC)	Egypt	2003	Problem-based learning with English instruction and German curricula; programmes in mechanical engineering, applied science, and industrial management	www.gup.edu.eg
Chinese German College for Postgraduate Studies (CDHK)	China	1998	Electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, business and commercial law (instruction in German and Chinese)	www.cdhk.tongji.edu.cn
Swiss German University	Indonesia	2000	Mechanical engineering, natural sciences, social sciences, law	www.sgu.ap.id
German Jordanian University	Jordan	2005	Mechanical engineering and business sciences, architecture, mechanical engineering, medical technology and resource management; courses in English based on the curricula of German technical schools	www.gju.edu.jo
German-Kazakh University (DKU)	Kazakhstan	1999	Energy and ecotechnology, teleinformatics, transport logistics, foreign policy management and regional studies in Central Asia; instruction in Russian and German based on German curricula	www.dku.kz
German University of Technology in Oman (GUTech)	Oman	2005	Geological sciences, applied information technology, regional management and tourism, urban planning and architecture/design; instruction in English	www.gutech.edu.om
German Institute of Science and Technology (GIST-TUM Asia)	Singapore	2002	Programmes in industrial chemistry, information system design, microelectronics, aircraft and missile engineering, transport and logistics, environmental engineering and computational science	www.gist.edu.sg
Andrássy University Budapest (AUB)	Hungary	2001	International economics and business, international relations, Central European history, Eastern European studies, international corporate law in Central and Eastern Europe, international European management and the 'Future of Central Europe in the European Union' PhD programme	www.andrassyuni.eu

Table 3

**Presence of American international universities in the regions of the world**

Name	Country	Established	Key areas		Website
American University of Central Asia	Kirgizia	1993	The humanities		www.auca.kg/ru
Girne American University	Cyprus	1985	Engineering, economics and business, architecture, applied sciences and the humanities		www.gau.edu.tr/en
American University in Kosovo	Kosovo	2002	Information technology, business management; English language		www.aukonline.org/web
American University of Beirut	Lebanon	1866	Agriculture; natural sciences; healthcare; architecture		www.aub.edu.lb
American University of Nigeria	Nigeria	2005	Natural sciences; economics, international politics, finance; informatics		www.american-universitynigeria.org
American University of Armenia	Armenia	1915	Business management, industrial production organisation, system management, informatics, political science, international relations, economics, law, English language		aua.am
Anglo-American University	Czech Republic	1990	Business management, the humanities, social sciences, journalism, law		www.aau.edu
American University in Bulgaria	Bulgaria	1991	The humanities		www.aubg.bg
American University of Kuwait	Kuwait	2003	Business management, economics, informatics and mathematics; international relations; Arab and foreign languages		www.auk.edu.kw
American University in Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bosnia and Herzegovina	2007	Finance и economics; information technology		aubih.edu.ba/en
American University in Dubai	United Arab Emirates	1995	Business management, finance, management; architecture, informatics, residential construction		www.aud.edu
American University of Afghanistan	Afghanistan	2002	Business management, political science, communications; informatics and information technology		auaf.edu.af/about
Central European University	Hungary	1991	The humanities		www.ceu.edu/about
American University of Iraq	Iraq	2006	The humanities, natural sciences, informatics, mechanical engineering		auis.edu.iq





The year 2006 witnessed maximum presence of branches of different Russian public (19 branches) and private (18 branches) universities. However, the format and quality of instruction at most branches do not make it possible to evaluate these initiatives as significant. They had little in common with actual international universities that affect the political climate of bilateral relations. By 2014, the number of branches had reduced to 26 with Russia receiving repeated complaints from the host states regarding the quality of education offered by the branches of its national centres of excellence [4].

Only four Russian national (Slavic) universities can be classed under the category of 'international universities'. The ideology behind them suggests the creation of a Russian international university operating independently in host jurisdictions. Apparently, the geography of a Russian national (Slavic) university presence correlates to Russia's international political presence, supports the interests of bilateral cooperation, and forms a practical space for various research and educational initiatives. These universities are intergovernmental educational institutions under joint jurisdiction of the Russian Federation and a host country that conduct their mission as centres for Russian education, science, and culture.

The failure of the Russian education to compete in the global context and a lack of a consistent policy for coordinating resources of research and educational cooperation with foreign policy interests are reflected in the geography of Russian universities abroad (Table 4). Branches of Russian universities operating in the CIS countries are viewed as irrelevant and will not be considered in this study.

Table 4

#### Geographical presence of Russian international universities

Name	Country	Established	Key areas	Сайт
B. N. Yeltsin Kyr-gyz-Russian Slavonic University	Kyr-gyzstan	1993	Medicine, the humanities, architecture	www.krsu.edu.kg
Russian Armenian (Slavonic) University	Armenia	1997	The humanities, media technology, law, mathematical modelling	www.rau.am
Russian-Tajik (Slavonic) University	Tajikistan	1996	Law, the humanities, economics	www.rt.ehost.tj
Belarusian Russian University	Belarus	2001	Engineering and technology, mechanical engineering	www.bru.by

The CIS Network Open University, an analogue of the Erasmus Mundus programme within the common educational space of the CIS member states supervised by Russian universities, was an attempt to fill the void. This project was created to increase the quality and attractiveness of higher education and strengthen cooperation and inter-university academic ties of the CIS member states. Yet for various reasons it did not yield any results and remained a paper tiger of CIS academic integration.

A similar fate befell the University of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) designed to link universities already functioning in the SCO member and observer states (Mongolia, India, Iran, and Pakistan). However, due to the absence of a legal framework, differences in educational standards, and a non-transparent financing mechanism the project got stuck at the preparatory stage.

**The current stage** of development of international research and educational presence is a product of rapidly developing information and communication technologies changing the forms of modern education, creating new resources for international cooperation, and forming new behaviour patterns for both providers and consumers of research and educational products. Against the background of modern multinational corporations and global information projects, which have gone far beyond the borders of sovereign states and entered the post-industrial world, there is a ‘new network reality’ that brings closer a new ‘end of history’ associated with the global access to the Internet.

Already today, when modern telecommunications technology is capable of granting global access, it is just a question of time and financing.

A political manifesto of the new network reality has already been published by Mark Zuckerberg, the founder and a major beneficiary of Facebook, under the title ‘Is Connectivity a Human Right?’ [12]. Zuckerberg envisions a global network as a basis of the new knowledge economy. He does not consider political ramifications. The general context suggests that global responsibility is to be shifted from national sovereignty to digital sovereignty.

Mark Zuckerberg: ‘No one should be forced to choose between Internet access and food and medicine, — it’s a necessity just like any other’. ‘Internet.org is a global partnership between technology leaders, nonprofits, local communities, and experts who are working together to bring the Internet to the two thirds of the world’s population that doesn’t have it. Through sharing tools, resources, and best practices, *Internet.org* partners will explore solutions in three major opportunity areas: affordability, efficiency, and business models.’ [12]. Assuming economic factors as major limitations to global access, a number of corporations are launching special free-traffic services. For instance, in 2010, Mark Zuckerberg initiated the 0.facebook.com project providing free access to the website’s text version. The number of Facebook users in Africa has doubled since the project launch. Similar efforts are made by references services, including the undisputed open information leader, Wikipedia.

Of course, the emergence of new communication tools was accompanied by the appearance of new opinion leaders and social structures, new forms and opportunities for social and political activism. The consolidating function of social networks during the ‘Arab spring’ has been addressed by both Russian [13] and international [14] scholars.

Global communication opportunities gave rise to global educational opportunities, for instance, popular online courses incorporating the practices of distance learning, which developed alongside the evolution of telecom solutions.



In this respect, it is worth mentioning an ambitious initiative of the American university consortium to provide online education for any Internet user regardless of citizenship, place of residence, etc., which, according to some estimates, will threaten the sovereign system of national education through global recruitment of talented youth.

At the same time, access to popular online courses is already being used in the political processes of controlling and managing global loyalty: some rules of the US export controls forbid US companies (such as Coursera, the largest online course platform) to provide their services in countries under US sanctions, including Cuba, Iran, Sudan, and Syria. According to these regulations, some of Coursera offers are considered 'services', which results in restrictions regarding the countries listed above.

International online education platform edX (boasting 456 courses in English in the beginning of 2015) forbade residents of Crimea to register for its courses (having joined AppStore, Visa, MasterCard, and PayPal in isolating the peninsula).

Therefore, the era of possible global access to education resources is witnessing the increasing use of educational resources to support foreign policies of states, while selective presence and targeted cooperation is being replaced by controlling global loyalty through the management of access to knowledge and opportunities.

At the same time, the future of international research and educational partnerships is in cooperation. In other words, the crisis in the international system of trust calls on universities and members of academic corporations to attain a new quality of international cooperation through developing a positive agenda, through bringing nations together, and through giving hope for the proverbial peace on Earth.

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