Globalization Strategies and the Economics Dispositif: Insights from Germany and the UK

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Jens Maesse *

Abstract: *»Globalisierungsstrategien und das ökonomische Dispositif: Einblicke aus Deutschland und Großbritannien«.* This contribution analyses current transformations in the field of economics as a reconfiguration of various academic cultures embedded in globalised hierarchies. The theoretical argument points to the rules and modalities which constitute the field of economics as a dispositif that covers different local academic fields and reaches into other areas of the global political economy. Drawing on empirical data from German and UK economics, the study shows how national fields respond to global pressures and create a global class society of economists. I will analyse, first, how academic hierarchies develop in two different countries and, second, how discourses of excellence constitute academic cultures within these hierarchies. On the basis of wide-ranging empirical data, the analysis develops new theoretical reflections about the logic of academic fields under globalisation. As a result, three different scientific cultures emerge that characterise the current field of academic economics: "native transnationals," "migration transnationals," and "local transnationals."

Keywords: Economic expert discourses, dispositif analysis, discourse studies, globalisation, world system theory.

1. Introduction

Academic fields typically tend to form an autonomous space of institutionalised positions, funds, publications, recruitment strategies, research methods, knowledge areas, and debates (Bourdieu 1988). Economics seems to be an exception, since it is systematically embedded in non-academic fields and closely connected to the field of social power positions in the state and the economy (Lebaron 2014; MacKenzie 2006; Schmidt-Wellenburg 2013, 2018). This trans-epistemic nature of economics impacts academic life, career paths, publication cultures, and the distribution of power and prestige within the discipline.

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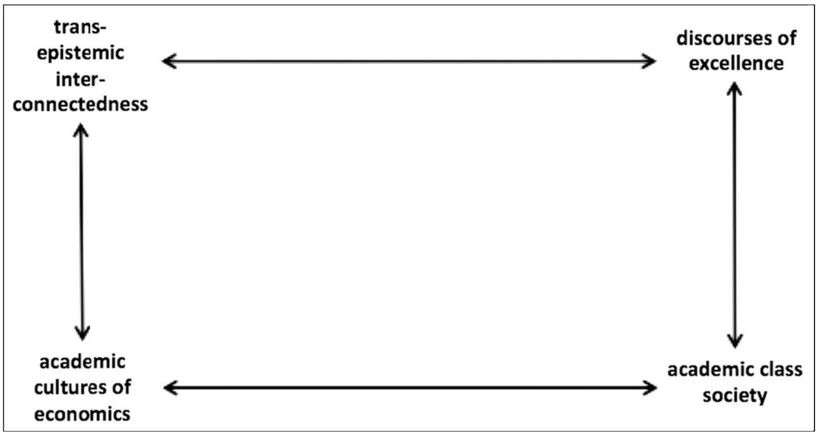
Against this background, my paper analyses current transformations in the field of economics as a reconfiguration of various academic cultures embedded in globalised hierarchies. The general theoretical argument points to the rules and modalities which constitute the field of economics as a *dispositif* that covers different local academic fields and reaches, through trans-epistemic orientation, into other areas of the globalised political economy. Drawing on empirical data from German and UK economics, collected and analysed in the FED project,[1] the study shows how local fields respond to global pressures and reconfigure as a global trans-epistemic dispositif. First, I will show how academic hierarchies develop in two different countries. Second, I will analyse how discourses of excellence constitute academic cultures within these hierarchies.

The analysis develops new theoretical reflections on the logic of academic fields under globalisation, on the basis of wide-ranging empirical data. I will propose the idea of economics as a hybrid social field that is dislocated from national fields and rearticulated in local fields, as well as global tendencies. To understand and grasp this hybrid character not simply as a stage in transition but as a fully developed social form, the paper will apply the Foucauldian term of economics dispositif (Foucault 1980). A dispositif is not a homogenous space or field, rather it regulates the heterogeneity between different regions, subfields, discursive translations, and capital conversions. This results in split and spectral battlefields among different academic cultures, between the local and the global, the academic and the political, the economic and media logic.

The paper will elaborate the global transformations of economics by taking into account the full complexities that constitute them through four interrelated dynamics, as illustrated in Figure 1. In a first step (section 2), the trans-epistemic interconnectedness that ties the economics discipline to the wider political economy will be explained. Since discourses of excellence are an indirect effect of these trans-epistemic relations, section 3 will describe the global emergence of excellence myths and explore how they are adopted in local contexts of the UK and Germany. The second part of section 3 will investigate how discourses of excellence influenced the formation of an academic class society, as reflected in strong academic hierarchies in the UK and weak but visible inequalities in the German-speaking world. In a last step, section 4 will conclude by describing how three different academic cultures emerged from the special field structure of economics that is now better understood as a globalised dispositif.

1 Financial Expert Discourse, based in Mainz (Germany, 2011-2013) and Warwick (UK, 2013-2015), funded by the Volkswagen Foundation.

Figure 1: The Constitution of the Globalised Economics Dispositif



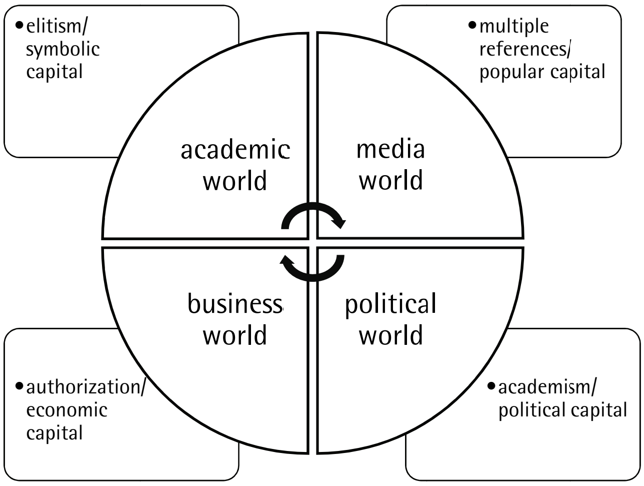
2. Theoretical and Historical Background: Globalisation, Hybridity, and the Place of the Economics Discipline in Current Capitalism

The current field of economics is an integral and important part of global capitalism. Its analysis cannot be detached from some initial reflections on the role of economic expert discourses within an increasingly heterogeneous social fabric. The social under globalisation is involved in permanent rearticulations between the global and the local (Robertson 1992) in all spheres of social action. According to world system theory (Arrighi 1994), globalisation emerged through the rise of capitalism, as a socio-economic system, from the very beginning, that was never restricted to national cultural (values and beliefs), political (governmental institutions, the state) and social boundaries (particular classes). Globalisation is, rather, constructed around trans-national centre-periphery structures of power and inequality that not only influence economic production but also shape cultural lifestyles in different regions of every specific historical structure. Academic and non-academic fields, cultures and discourses are in constant interaction with the ruling hegemonic logic at a specific time in history. Therefore, the global social order is not a fixed system, it is rather a dynamic process of constant exchanges, networks, interactions, and transformations (Foucault 2008; Hardt and Negri 2001). Studies of globalisation analyse what type and form globalisation in each field takes, because the current world is already a result of multiple globalisation dynamics, that has been evolving for many centuries (Braudel 1985).

Accordingly, my analysis will not raise questions of whether economics is global or not. It is particularly interested in the *historical* mode of globalisation that leads to certain changes in the discursive logic and field structure in German-speaking and UK economics departments. The current historical mode seems to be dominated by a combination of *discourses of excellence,* as well as the construction of an *academic class society of significant hierarchies* between researchers and departments (Maesse 2017). Against this backdrop, I study the globalisation dynamics of economics departments by focusing on certain *transformations* in a complex trans-epistemic constellation encompassing local academic structures and global academic and non-academic pressures. These transformations are driven by *academisation* and *governmentalisation* dynamics that will be outlined in the remaining part of this section.

From an *empirical viewpoint*, economics departments are regarded as a cultural aspect of the current capitalist system that produces symbolic capital for legitimation discourses (Fitzgerald and O'Rourke 2016). As economics is closely connected to institutions within the field of power (Coats 1993; Lebaron 2001) and, therefore, to the current form of economic globalisation, it is also captured by actual trends of cultural globalisation (Maesse 2015a). This is why, from a *theoretical starting point*, Bourdieusian field theory will be further developed with Foucauldian discourse concepts. Whereas the late 19th and early 20th centuries were characterised by a high degree of socio-institutional integration attempts, the current form of globalisation seems to be marked by trends of de-differentiation and hybridisation. Heterogeneity, ambiguity, hybridity, and transversal communications become more important. Field theory accounts for the material and fixed power relations of the social structure. Accordingly, fields are sites for fixing meanings, creating hierarchies and institutionalising social relations. Discourses, on the other hand, open up fields for complex and heterogeneous meaning-making processes. Thus, in economic expert discourses in Europe and beyond, fields cannot exist without discourses, since the latter make economics languages relevant in many contexts within academia, politics, administration, business, and so forth. And discourses need fields as a socio-material base. Only when field logics and discourses interact do hybrid cultures come into existence and start to evolve as a result of global interactions. Hence, I use a discourse-field concept, drawing on both Foucault and Bourdieu (Maesse and Hamann 2016), to grasp current academic cultures in economics.

Figure 2: Trans-Epistemic Field of Economics



Source: Maesse (2015a, 290).

The concept of the trans-epistemic field of economic expert discourses will be applied in order to study how globalisation strategies affect economics departments. This concept helps us to uncover the institutional morphology that accounts for the formation of hybrid academic cultures in economics under the current globalisation regime. However, globalisation in economics is not a process based solely on the internal dynamics of academic life; rather, local fields respond to globalisation processes of culture, the economy, and political institutions. These processes take place within a political and social constellation that is marked by a high degree of "academisation" (when actors in society use academic credentials as power devices in political, economic, and media discourses) and "governmentalisation" (when the relations of exchange, translation, and communication between different subfields of the trans-epistemic field are intensified). Therefore, academic fields of economics are deeply involved in the political economy.

Academisation accounts for the role of economics language, symbols, models, concepts, rhetoric, actors and so forth at play in society; it refers to an ongoing trend towards the proliferation of symbolic capitals, based on academic credentials, that are used for the ascription of social recognition and the construction of legitimation in politics, media, and the economy (Collins 1979; Reitz 2017). As a result, the university system serves, among other things, as a source of power (Schmidt-Wellenburg 2017) and provides the rest of society with credentials (Lebaron 2006). As such, it provides society with the cultural means from academia to create "expert positions" as discursive hegemonies (contrasting with this, see the Argentine case in Heredia 2018, in this issue).

Motivated through academization, *governmentalisation* highlights the tendency that brings the economics discipline closer to political and economic institutions (Dezalay and Garth 2009; Fourcade 2006; MacKenzie 2006). As historical studies on the emergence of economic knowledge have shown (Desrosières 1998; Morgan 1990; Speich Chassé 2013), economics was developed in the 20th century as a political science and had a huge impact on the formation of ministries, policies, central banks, financial markets, and other institutions of the political economy (Hall 1989). The economics discipline is subjected to a certain pressure of expectations by governmentalisation. Whereas academisation explains how economics affects society, governmentalisation takes society's influence on economics into account.

The trans-epistemic field grasps these horizontal exchange mechanisms. It illustrates how the academic world of economics is embedded within the global political economy and it accounts for the power strategies that economic experts use when they take positions in media and policy discourse (Fitzgerald and O'Rourke 2016). It can explain why the economics discipline was rearticulated as an "elitism dispositif" at the end of the 20th century (Maesse 2017). The idea of the trans-epistemic field was developed to show and illustrate how a discursive economy of academic signs and symbols, models and languages, expert statements, theories, paradigms, and other cultural goods from economics circulate through the institutional contexts of academia, politics, media, and the economy. It accounts for the hidden but constitutive discursive and institutional morphology that makes the formation of economic experts as hegemonic actors in many fields of society possible.

Whereas former studies on the trans-epistemic field investigated the horizontal interrelationships of economics with society (Maesse 2013, 2015a), as well as internal hierarchisation logics and the formation of an elite culture (Maesse 2017), this article will take into account the different academic cultures that emerge as hybrids from globalisation dynamics. The following section draws on results from empirical studies on German-speaking and British economics (Maesse 2015b, 2016) to reflect theoretically on how academic discourses and institutions in economics react to trends of globalisation. These global transformations are themselves already a result of ongoing and accelerating governmentalisation and academisation processes. Thus, trans-epistemic embeddedness is an important prerequisite to situate the following analysis.

3. Forces of Academic Globalisation

Sociological theory has analysed how social change appears under globalisation (Robertson 1992). According to the general model, shared by institutionalism, world system theory and cultural studies alike, social transformations are regarded as effects of local responses to global pressures. Whereas institutional theories (Schofer and Meyer 2005) explain these changes in terms of institutionalised values of a modern world polity, my study follows power-related approaches to global culture and world system theory (Arrighi 1994; Hardt and Negri 2001). The latter point to the role played by powerful social groups, discourses, and techniques, which are embedded within structures of inequality and domination. These groups are usually located at hegemonic centres of a world capitalist system, whereas global transformations appear at peripheral and semi-peripheral sites (Dezalay and Garth 2009). From the perspective of (semi-)peripheral institutions, the centre serves as a role model for "legitimate," "unavoidable," or "competitive" forms of social change (Münch 2014).

Accordingly, hegemonic institutions are usually idealised, decontextualized, and presented as exemplary role models for social change to local institutions. Different groups and diverse contexts start to interact with each other and enter into discourses on political reform and social change. When dynamics of global change start, dialectics of institutional reactivity begin to operate (Espeland and Sauder 2007). The decontextualised model of the centre institution (i.e. certain journal rankings, ratings, and impact-measurement rules) serves as a normative discursive model that is interpreted by subordinate institutions in terms of diverse re-contextualisations (i.e. the "Diamond List" in the UK, the "Handelsblatt Rankings" of economists in Germany). This leads to particular hybrid academic forms, because it changes the way institutions perceive themselves and how reputation, quality, and academic best practice are attributed to certain academic researchers. Therefore, globalisation is not only a process of power and domination, but also based on discourse and cultural translation. Both, power and discourse create new socio-symbolic forms of hybridity in globally dislocated fields.

In the first part of this section, I will outline how global models operate as pressure technologies; in the second part, I will look at how German-speaking and British universities have responded through local interpretations to global trends. Both pressures and interpretative responses will be captured as "forces of academic globalisation."

3.1 Global Pressures within Academia

3.1.1 The Formalist Orthodoxy: A Globalised Style of Economic Reasoning

In the 18th, 19th, and early 20th centuries, the economics discipline was characterised, worldwide, by a high degree of local and institutional diversity and a low degree of canonisation and standardisation (Yonay 1998). But the face of economics changed in the 20th century, especially after the Second World War. The USA, as the hegemonic centre of the capitalist world system in the 20th century (Arrighi 1994), was fully established and economics became a political science for governing the emerging global state of affairs (Hall 1989). In the course of these transformations within the global political economy, the economics discipline started to universalise certain academic forms and practices. A "mainstream" emerged that was, first, dominated by Keynesian ideas (often within the framework of the neoclassical synthesis) (from the 1940s to the 1960s), and later on, in the fourth quarter of the 20th century, it was replaced by ideas from neoclassical microeconomics.

Next to the theoretical debate between Keynesianism and neoclassicism, behaviourism and rationalism, certain scientific standards emerged and changed knowledge production in economics in favour of models and formalism (Blaug 2003). Economics became a model science (Morgan 1990). Styles of reasoning, argumentation, presenting data, and developing research ideas are now expected to occur in terms of quantifiable variables, with strong causal relations between elements of a certain model, based on assumptions and devoted to prospects and forecasts. These standards became, after the 1970s, increasingly recognised as global scientific standards. "Modern economics" and "scientific investigations" have been presented in model form as a new global gold standard for economic knowledge production. Whereas this development is often described as "neoclassical orthodoxy," research from the current history of economic ideas, especially on developments within the last three decades, seems to suggest that a broad variety of non-neoclassical approaches was established and has been awarded with the highest consecrations of the field (Colander, Holt, and Rosser 2004; Fine and Milonakis 2009).

However, following Blaug, I would suggest calling these tendencies a "formalist orthodoxy" and not neoclassical, since the model's style, as well as quantifying and forecasting oriented tendencies, has not been questioned by critiques of the neoclassical paradigm. This term helps us not to confuse academic styles of reasoning and argumentation with academic content and the political orientation of economic theory and analysis. Thus,

> economics underwent a metamorphosis in the late 1940s and 1950s […]. I call it a Formalist Revolution, after Ward, because it was marked by extreme "formalism" – not just a preference, but an absolute preference for the form of an economic argument over its content – which frequently (but not necessarily) implies reliance on mathematical modelling and whose ultimate objective is, like the notorious Hilbert program in mathematics, the complete axiomatization of economic theory. (Blaug, 2003, 396)

Accordingly, while important ideas from neoclassical equilibrium are, in fact, rejected by new Keynesian macroeconomics and behaviourist microeconomics, as well as by more or less heterodox economists, most of these post-neoclassical academic cultures still agree with the formalist style (Pahl 2013).

3.1.2 The Paper Form: A Global Space of Publication Visibility

In parallel with the emergence of model-related scientific standards ("formalist orthodoxy"), a set of very specific academic forms developed. These forms serve as "role models" for good scientific practice and include the journal paper form (and the working paper form), a detailed differentiated set of rated journals, a certain form of writing a paper and a highly institutionalised way of developing a publishable piece of work. In economics, and especially in particular departments that are recognised as "elite departments," it is no longer possible to publish, present, and develop academic ideas and research in a more or less diverse and non-standardised way. The paper is the *ultima ratio* in these departments. As the following excerpt from an interview with a British economics professor (who received a BA from Oxford, did his PhD in the 1960s and '70s in the US and returned to the LSE later) illustrates, the paper form started to shape, prescribe, and dominate academic life after the 1970s. This development began in the USA and arrived in the UK in the 1990s. The introduction of the Research Assessment Exercise/ Research Excellence Framework has finally institutionalised this tendency in Britain (see section 3.2).

> [The professor was asked by the interviewer to tell the story how s/he became a professor, starting with the PhD.] And I was fortunate because James Tobin was there and the idea was to take a structure that he devolved and more or less fitted to the British banking system, which is what I did. And for me, there was partly a question of becoming trained as a professional economist, having done admitted in Philosophy [PPE at Oxford] as a graduate, so it was served as a retouring to go on. So have taken a lot's of courses, doing more maths and stuff like that. And in publications? [referring back to an earlier question by the interviewer] There was not nearly so much emphasis on those days on publication. Eh, I did publish: one paper from my thesis, but not in a top journal. But fortunately at LSE, I was able to publish in top journals [examples are mentioned]. But they were neither based on my PhD. [Question: can you remember when this development starts to publish papers in top journals?] Well, it was, to a tendency, they wanted to do that, ehm, fortunately I did! In that sense, my best two publications came quite young, when I was at LSE. But there was not the same crazy insistence as there is now: "do that or you are out." There wasn't that feeling. There was a feeling of: "do publish if you can, and if you do you can be promoted." But there wasn't the same pressure that is there now.

From the 1960s onwards, and especially since the 1990s in the UK and later in the rest of Europe, the paper form and the interlinked tendency to go for publication in top journals has increasingly dominated the academic culture in economics. Other forms of publication have lost relevance. The paper form includes a certain style of reasoning and it prescribes particular legitimate forms of developing arguments, hypotheses, and data. Whereas other social sciences and humanities use monographs, volume contributions, journal papers, research reports, and other forms of presenting research ideas and discussing results in very heterogeneous formats, economics expects to present (almost) everything that will get attention from the scientific community in journal paper form. Not only are the logic of writing and the type of publishing limited to the paper format but, also, the scope of thinking, the reach of arguments, the space for developing a story and the quantity of data are highly restricted to a format of usually 8,000 words.

Furthermore, not every argument and topic that have been published elsewhere are acceptable. Papers must relate to papers published in certain journals through a restricted number of citations to stand a chance of getting published. For example, an envisaged A-journal paper can quote research from C- or D-journal papers only to a very limited degree. Too many citations from lower-level journal papers would "disqualify" it for publication in an A-journal. Accordingly, research topics, questions, data and so forth are pre-framed by papers from a certain sort of journal. They define what the "research frontier" is and how publications should relate to it in order to get published in "top journals." The paper form is much more complex and has far-reaching consequences for what is possible in research and how it must be presented and connected to previous ideas. A detailed study of these practices has not yet been conducted (for graduate schools see Maesse 2018). To fill this research gap might be particularly important, since the paper form has certain effects on local academic practices within the global space of publication.

3.2 How Departments Respond

Economists, economics institutes, and departments in European universities (and beyond) have developed certain practices and strategies in their academic life, organisation, and culture to respond to the global tendencies and pressures outlined above. Indeed, responding to a tendency is probably the most effective way to create the feeling of "pressure" in local academic contexts, as described in the interview above. Therefore, creating pressure and developing responding strategies support each other. They are symbiotic. Response strategies to the paper form and formalist orthodoxy are as important as the institutional and structural consequences of these reactions. In the following sections I analyse these "reactivities" (Espeland and Sauder 2007), starting with how discourses of excellence react to the paper form and to the formalist orthodoxy (sections 3.2.1 and 2), followed by a discussion of the different institutional contexts of Germany and the UK (section 3.2.3). In the next three sections (3.2.4, 5, and 6), I will show how discourses of excellence are translated into material inequalities.

3.2.1 Discourses of Excellence in the UK since the Late 1980s

Whereas in the German-speaking world meritocratic changes in academic culture appeared during the late 1990s and the years after the start of the new millennium, UK economics had already experienced these transformations in the 1990s. As Lee, Pham and Gu (2013) have shown, the British Research Excellence Framework / Research Excellence Assessment (now REF, formerly REA) was used as an instrument to establish the paper form and the formalist orthodoxy. The REF is a regulatory framework via which the government distributes research grants for a period of five years among British universities. Each department applies for funding via a clearly defined competition in which academic quality is evaluated. Lee, Pham and Gu analysed how certain academic groups succeeded by establishing neoclassical, orthodox, and formalist criteria for the assessment of academic excellence in cooperation with governmental funding agencies. Accordingly, heterodox styles of reasoning and non-conformist forms of writing and publishing lost ground in these competitions. Academics with a research orientation that was not compatible with REF criteria were moved out through follow-up funding competitions.

Economists trained in technical methods and equipped with paper writing skills were appointed in affluent departments in order to equip the REF group with competitive researchers. Now, research-oriented economists must follow the paper form and the formalist orthodoxy in order to receive grants and attract students (and their tuition fees). Numbers for the REF scheme rule UK economics, and the production of numbers is immediately connected to the paper form. A small research "elite" is now appointed by only a few departments and the entire economics-department system in the UK is becoming more and more divided between a couple of "elite" institutions and a huge array of departments which are excluded from research grants (Johnston and Reeves 2014).

UK science policy can use the REF as a strong and centralist instrument to lead (intended or unintended) research activities in a particular direction and establish certain academic values and practices of excellence. Even if centralist tools remind us of a "Soviet style" of governance, this is only apparently surprising, since competition-based systems tend towards stronger hierarchies, compared to state- and profession-based systems. The "market" is not a reality. It is a political tool for the construction of strong social hierarchies, as the British case exemplifies. As a result, only seven departments received more than £700,000 external funding in 2006/7.[2] This is a comparatively small group, because 35 departments participated in the REF in 2008 and more than 60 departments exist in the UK (Maesse 2016, 13).

2 For a detailed overview of all external research income in UK economics including a time line from 2000-2007 see: <http://www.rae.ac.uk/submissions/submissions.aspx?id=34&type=uoa> (Accessed April 17, 2018).

3.2.2 Discourses of Excellence in German-Speaking Economics since the Late 1990s

The field of economics in the German-speaking world and the UK used different strategies, institutional arrangements, discourses, and timeframes to respond to the paper form and the formalist orthodoxy. In the late 1990s, German-speaking economists began to establish rankings and an excellence cult. Through the introduction of research quality assessment procedures, as well as the establishment of new values and classification schemes, economists changed their definitions and perceptions of research standards. At the same time, a star cult, elite ideologies, and meritocratic values increased and became more and more important for how researchers perceive and categorise each other.

This trend is reflected by a relatively rapid change in how German-speaking economists perceive particular journals as important for their work ("relevance") and important in terms of disciplinary prestige ("reputation"). A comparative survey by Bräuniger, Muck and Haucap (2011; see also Bräuninger and Haucap 2001) about the relevance and reputation of journals among German-speaking economists found that a significant transformation had occurred in the perception and valuation of journals between the years 2000 and 2010 among economics professors. Whereas, in 2000, old professors perceived German language and policy-related journals, based in Germany, as highly relevant for their work, younger economists already tended towards American-based journals with an international scope. The same discrepancy can be found in the valuation of reputations, even if older professors' classifications are characterised by significant differences between relevance and reputation. Thus, journal papers replace books and other types of academic communication as the most prestigious form of publication.

The breakthrough and establishment of the American-based "top-journal" hierarchy can be verified in a follow-up survey ten years later. Now, the discrepancies between relevance and reputation among older professors are becoming smaller and the high reputation of "international top journals" is fully established. Publishing in academically oriented journals, which are classified and hierarchised by a highly homogenous journal impact system, is now an academic standard and a precondition to becoming a professor. My interviews with postdoctoral economists from 2011, 2012, and 2013 substantiate the results of these surveys (Maesse 2018). These results attest to a change in academic value systems, even if policy-oriented journals with a local base in national and particular thematic contexts seem to recover at a certain level of relevance and reputation, even among young professors in the second survey (Bräuniger, Muck and Haucap 2011). This can be understood as a local re-articulation of traditional academic practices which will not be swept away by globalisation but will find their place within the globalised dispositif.

3.2.3 The Institutional Context of Excellence in the UK and Germany Compared

Whereas UK economics is characterized by strong centralist governance institutions, such as the REF, which support the formation of hierarchies, huge differences between universities, and elitist images among researcher (Johnston and Reeves 2014; Lee, Pham and Gu 2013), the German academic community has more autonomy from the state as well as from certain forms of state-directed funding competition. The main reason for this high degree of academic freedom is the state-funded academic system, based on student numbers. This is still relatively strong, even if neoliberal reforms have shifted the funding of universities towards excellence over recent decades (Münch 2014). In contrast, British departments compete for research grants as well as for tuition fees. Even if academic quality cannot be reduced to money, academic output in teaching as well as research is finally measured in terms of economic success in the UK. In contrast, tuition fees play no significant role in Germany and a large amount of money for financing researcher and lecturer positions is still provided by basic funding, determined by student numbers. In addition to that, the German Research Council (*Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft*, DFG) is an institution governed by the academic community itself. The state can neither direct money nor do they control how quality in teaching and research is determined and assessed. Instead, the logic of the DFG seems to support already established academic networks with some extra money (Münch 2008).

The DFG is not comparable with the REF because it distributes less money than the REF throughout the already established structure of the academic community. Most of it is distributed to professors and not to departments. The REF supports departments as well as entire researcher communities and groups. In the German-speaking world, the professor as an institution is still in a strong position compared to the department, even if this aspect is gradually changing in German economics. Challenges and transformations must take root within German professor-oriented community structures, but some groups are not able to dominate others as strongly as in the REF.

Nevertheless, similar changes to those in UK economics vis-à-vis adoption of the paper form have taken place, even if strong regulatory devices such as the REF are missing. This can be explained with the strong influence that internationalisation discourses in Germany have on academic identities, in general, and with the openness of the German academic community in economics to neoclassical ideas, in particular (Pühringer and Hirte 2015). “Internationalisation” discourses became important during the reform initiatives in the 1990s, especially in the course of the “Bologna-Process” and the “Excellence Initiative” (Maesse 2010; Münch 2014). The distribution of money within universities, institutes, and to researchers, as well as appointment strategies, became increasingly influenced by demonstrating international activities (in publication, biographies, languages skills, networks, and so forth). These political initiatives influenced especially the younger generations and eventually supported the formation of a more internationally oriented academic habitus. To be "internationally recognised" (demonstrated by following certain academic standards) became an important identity strategy in the German academic community. "National" or "regional" academic identities are often associated with a certain provincialism and backwardness in these discourses, whereas international capital (in the form of publications, experiences, networks, biographical stages, language skills, and so forth) can be used to obtain a recognised position in the view of other researchers (see, for Switzerland, Rossier, Bühlmann and Mach 2017). German-speaking economics professors do not need "strong" governmental regulations to accommodate global trends. They are, instead, governed by "soft" governmental regulations, such as internationalisation capital, as an identity project to which certain standards can be attached (especially combined with neoclassical and other orthodox orientations).

Table 1: Discourses of Excellence in the UK and Germany Compared

	United Kingdom	Germany[3]
Time period of discourses of excellence	Late 1980s	Late 1990s
Institutions	Strong, centralist (REA/REF); high degree of financialisation, institutionalised third-party funding competition	Soft, decentralised (internationalisation habitus); low but significant degree of financialisation; increasing third-party funding orientation
Rankings	Diamond List	Handelsblatt
Hierarchies in the field	Strong hierarchies between a few departments at the centre (4-7), a large group of competing "middle class" departments (10-20), and a very large group of marginalised departments (30+)	Weak but visible hierarchies of a few large departments (7-12), a large group of competing middle class departments (20-30), another large group of "well established but not competitive" small and middle seized institutes (30-40), a small group of "sleeping class" departments (no activities beyond "business as usual")

3.2.4 Discourses of Excellence, the Job Market and Social of Recognition

The ability to publish in top journals in order to participate in REF competitions is a prerequisite for an economist in the UK seeking a position at a department

[3] This includes Austria and German-speaking Switzerland.

in the higher ranks of the hierarchy, whereas particular teaching skills are expected in those institutions that have stopped participating in REF competitions. Likewise, in the German-speaking world, discourses of excellence become increasingly influential to obtain an academic position in economics. Publishing in internationally recognised journals and being involved in transnational academic networks provides German-speaking economists with international capital. Especially for economists in certain elite departments, international experiences as well as paper publications in A-rated journals are important factors. This impression has been confirmed by interviews I have carried out with economists at different career stages and with varying institutional belonging. Journal Impact Factors (JIF) – in contrast to research-impact factors (Hammarfelt and Rushforth 2017) – are relevant in economics for all sorts of decisions, ranging from appointing people and distributing funds to awarding researchers and evaluating research institutions. Especially the *Handelsblatt* (HB) Rankings of economists (Butz and Wohlrabe 2016) are recognised as an important indicator of research excellence. Individual HB scores became increasingly important to get a job (Beckmann and Schneider 2013), and even research institutes that are usually connected to non-academic consultancy and policy advice, are frequently asked by the Leibniz Funding Council (*Wilhelm-Gottlieb Leibniz Gemeinschaft*) to account for the academic excellence of their work.

In the UK as well as in Germany, ranking scores and paper journals have developed as the new academic gold standard in recent decades (20 years in Germany, 30 years in the UK). Discourses of excellence contribute in many fields and contexts to the formation of social recognition. In contrast to other academic disciplines that started to play with the idea of excellence, this becomes relevant for the academic job market in economics and for the distribution of other institutional positions.

3.2.5 The Role of Graduate Schools for the Reproduction of Discourses of Excellence

This tendency has been confirmed by my qualitative studies on graduate schools (Maesse 2018) and by the survey of Önder and Schweitzer (2017) in Germany. Önder and Schweitzer show that publication in peer-reviewed journals six years after graduation increased between 1991 (18%) and 2008 (46%). This is an indicator that general journal-paper orientation as well as technical training became increasingly important, especially in the period under investigation. My study shows how doctoral students develop certain knowledge, skills, and techniques. Young scientists are professionally trained to prepare a certain sort of paper for publication in a particular journal system. Within four or five years, economists learn everything they need to know about how to publish regularly and not only occasionally in highly ranked journals. Publishing is much more than writing on a sheet of paper. It is a skill that includes a certain style of project planning, reading, understanding, crafting arguments, talking, presenting, networking, and suffering. This is not an individual process, because publishing economics journal papers is an art that is learned in a highly institutionalised environment, embedded in dense social networks, and controlled by a complex array of techniques and procedures.

At the micro level, graduate schools are dispositifs of power and knowledge for the production of publication cadres, and at the macro level for the reproduction of power and inequality among researchers and institutes. Not every economist reaches the centre of this dispositif, because the dispositif includes a certain habitus and keeps others at a distance, mediated by meritocratic ideologies. Graduate schools tend to reproduce a small class of researchers of "elite class economists" and to separate them from the rest of the globalised community. But graduate schools do not only host docs and postdocs, they also appoint a certain type of economics professor. Networks (social capital) are woven and certain position-holders (especially on certain editorial boards) meet skilled economists. A vicious circle of exclusion / declassification and excellence / hierarchisation is initiated through the reproduction of academic elites beyond individual careers. Thus, graduate schools and the places they are located are the hinge between rankings as symbolic classification systems and the formation and reproduction of social hierarchies and elite classes.

Thus, various strategies support the adaption to the paper form and the formalist orthodoxy in the UK and Germany (as well as in Switzerland and Austria): the introduction of rankings and ratings (*Handelsblatt* and the Diamond List), the implementation of research funding regulations (the REF), the establishment of excellence-oriented academic norms and values, the universalisation of a formalism orthodoxy as much as a certain internationalisation identity politics by economists and the introduction of graduate schools for the production of publication cadres. These new symbolic forms of academic classification will not be able to change academic life and adapt to global trends. They must be connected to the material conditions of academia in order to change academic structures and discourses in a significant way. These material conditions are academic power struggles over money, positions, and publications, conflicts over new institutions (academic roles, scientific norms, type of academic networks, and so forth) and how new generations of academics will be socialised (graduate schools, cumulative dissertation, lingua franca). Symbolic classifications must be translated into social classes in order to establish a new form of academic dispositif on the macro level. The next section will outline how these transformations from classifications to social classes are reflected empirically.

3.2.6 (D)evaluations: Ranking Impact on Academic Class Formations in Economics

One of the main goals of the FED project was to study different classes and cultures of economists in the German-speaking world and to compare the results with data from UK economics. The project was not only interested in different cultures across different institutions (such as universities, banks, central banks, governments, and economic research institutes), but also within a particular type of institution, namely universities. On the basis of a simple comparative study of economics professors (including junior professors) at German, Swiss, and Austrian economic institutes at universities in 2011 (here, all researchers who were not appointed as professors in economics institutes in universities were excluded), different classes of respective academic cultures could be identified in terms of certain academic capital.[4]

The results of this analysis show that all economists are equally involved in academic life in the German-speaking world. For example, economists in all sorts of institutes (small, medium, large, mega) are involved in academic organisations and on editorial boards; but economists appointed to mega or large institutes tend to occupy positions in international organisations and on the editorial boards of highly scored journals. Likewise, economists in all types of institutes received research grants. Some small institutes have a very high level of research grants per professor (100%), whereas some others have no research grants at all. The results for medium institutes are identical. This *heterogeneity* of the composition of research grants per professor decreases with the increase in magnitude of an institute. Therefore, mega and large institutes all have a relatively homogenous composition of research grants and every professor seems to be involved in funding. The trend continues in terms of publication. Every professor has published, on average, the same number of works (between 10 and 120 pieces) within the last ten years (age and career stage were ignored). But professors at large and mega institutes publish more papers in journals

4 In a first step, a data corpus was structured by three criteria: names of professors, affiliation, and numbers of docs and postdocs per professor. In a second step, the entire corpus was divided into four subgroups: professors at very large institutes with more than 20 professors (mega institutes), professors at large institutes with 10 to 19 professors, professors at medium-size institutes with 6 to 9 professors and professors at small institutes (less than 6). This differentiation was made because the interview results with German economists suggested that economists at larger institutes seem to be more prestigious than those at small institutes. This impression was confirmed by interviews with UK economists. Additionally, a clear positive correlation could be identified between one's position in the *Handelsblatt* Rankings and the size of an institute for 2011 and 2013. Against the backdrop of this structure, representative clusters of economists for each group (mega, large, medium, small) were formed and their CVs collected. I have analysed these CVs with regard to a) the *number* and *composition* of publications, b) the *number* and *composition* of grants and c) the *number* and *composition* of positions in academic organisations (for details see Maesse, 2015b, 98-104).

which have *Handelsblatt* rankings on A, B, or C levels. Accordingly, *Handelsblatt* journal productivity (*Handelsblatt* points per professor at each institute) is relatively high at large economics institutes compared to smaller ones.

Thus, large, and especially mega, institutes tend to be more internationally oriented, they are characterised by a high constancy of research grants and publish frequently in internationally recognised top journals, compared to their colleagues at medium-sized and small institutes. Professors at large and mega institutes are obviously led by different criteria in their academic life. These scholars have a distinguished academic lifestyle, since they publish in different institutional contexts (a mix of regional / national / international / esoteric settings vs. a clear-cut international top-journal setting), they have different funding behaviours (individualist vs. collective) and meet different people (national / regional orientation vs. international elite orientation) at different locations (certain workshops, more international conferences).

Table 2: Types of Institutes Compared (German-Speaking World)

	Mega and large institutes	Medium and small institutes
Publication	Highly scored international journals	Mixed forms
Funding	Constancy	Heterogeneity
Positions	Often international positions	Mostly national positions

These results can be interpreted in two ways. In terms of class theory, a ruling class is dominating subordinated middle classes and academic working classes; in terms of micro sociological Science and Technology Studies (STS), two different academic cultures have emerged with different beliefs, practices, and contexts. Evaluation practices by rankings and similar categorisations of research outcomes are translated into structural devaluations of institutional positions. Epistemic cultures are not simply the deterministic result of structural hierarchies. Culture transforms structures and is re-embedded in new institutionalised inequalities. The structural rearticulating of symbolic adaptions is not only "evaluations" (as STS would argue), nor are these reducible to "dominations" (as class theory would suggest). They are, rather, (d)evaluations because they combine horizontal and vertical symbolic classifications with structural sedimentations and institutionalised hierarchies – and open up this discourse / power dispositif to future social struggles and transformations (Angermuller and Maesse 2015).

As this chapter has shown, discourses of excellence can lead to the formation of material inequalities and structural hierarchies. These hierarchies are already visible in the German-speaking world and are even stronger and bigger in the UK, as Lee, Pham and Gu (2013) have shown. The interplay between discourses of excellence in teaching and research and the strong centralised financial conditions represented by the REF has opened up great distances between a few departments at the top of the hierarchy and many others located in the medium and lower classes of academic reputation and financial power.

Table 3: Class Distinction in UK Institutions in Economics

Elite class	Near-elite class	Middle class	Working class
London School of Economics University College London Warwick Oxford Essex	Nottingham Bristol Queen Mary Cambridge Manchester Southampton Royal Holloway Exeter	Kent Leicester Birkbeck Surrey Sheffield York Birmingham East Anglia Sussex City Brunel Loughborough	London Metropolitan Kingston Manchester Metropolitan

Source: Lee, Pham and Gu 2013, 700.

What we learn from these results is that not every group of economists is equally connected to globalisation tendencies. Whereas a small group dwells at the top of the hierarchy (including all the heteronomic consequences implied in the idea of an "elite"), others supply teaching and research at "middle class" and "working class" universities. This may remind us of the classical distinction between an academic "haute bourgeoisie," a "petite bourgeoisie," or the "middle classes," "working classes," and so forth. What we find is a social system consisting of two, three, or more academic classes, with each one following a different academic lifestyle. Instead of switching too quickly to a one-sided class analysis, which would explain these results in terms of domination, exclusion, and subordination, I suggest an interpretation that not only looks at the top of the hierarchy but takes the entire dispositif into consideration. Thus, only the interplay of all elements of this dispositif, including the different academic lifestyles and other practices of the classes and subgroups of the globalised economics culture, make the emergence as well as the politico-economic role of an elite class (including an elitist *esprit de corps*) in German and UK economics possible. Especially the passive character and heteronomy of the academic elite in politico-economic contexts can be grasped and better understood against this background, since the academic world of economics is highly influenced by societal academisation tendencies as well as the governmentalisation processes that connect academia to the institutions of the economy, the media, and politics. The following section will now sketch out how three different academic cultures relate to this hierarchy.

4. Three Academic Cultures of Economics Dispositif: How Local Fields Interact

In contrast to classical sociological concepts which tend to focus on clear-cut actors, habitus and social identities, the concept of the dispositif (Foucault 1980) allows us to identify different cultures and academic lifestyles located in a field that is trans-epistemic and trans-nationalised. It therefore points to the internal complexities of academic identities, as well as to the hybrid character of cultures. While many micro sociologists do not take into account the field character of global social complexities, the dispositif concept insists on capital formations, hierarchies, and social fields in the formation of global hybridity. Thus, the dispositif concept includes both, i.e. local specificities as well as the global connectedness of academic cultures of globalisation.

The current field of economics is a set of different academic and non-academic discourses that span different national, linguistic, regional, institutional, ideological, and paradigmatic contexts. This kind of transgressed, heterogeneous, and hybrid field can be studied, as a dispositif, in terms of "capital" and "discourse." The capital dimension accounts for the sedimented power relations within local social structures. It shows how valuable resources are distributed and accumulated between certain actors in their struggle for institutionalised positions (especially professorships). It is impossible to obtain an institutional academic position without academic capital. In contrast, the discursive dimension opens up local fields for global communications and symbolic exchanges. It constitutes what Bourdieu used to call the "social space" and transforms it in terms of discursive attributions, negotiations, and classifications. Discourses constitute the other not only as a fixed social position but, additionally, in an *imaginary* way. Discourses establish symbolically mediated social relations across local fields (and only *local* fields!) in order to move field borders, challenge sedimented structures, and introduce new sorts of capital to it. Between sedimented structures and circulative discourses a third dimension of the dispositif emerges as a hybrid "academic lifestyle" or "culture."

To start with an epistemological presupposition, it is impossible to oversee the entire dispositif from one particular viewpoint ("eagle's perspective"), because it is not only a fixed or relational structure (which can be measured, counted, and displayed) but includes discursive dynamics and perspectivations as well. The discursive other appears from the discursive speaker's viewpoint and cannot be objectified. This is why the contours and logics of the globalised economics dispositif are closely related to the perspective that the observer takes. Thus, from a European perspective (and especially from a German and a French point of view), certain globalisation trends appear to be "Americanised" (Dezalay and Garth 2009; Fourcade 2006; Hesse 2012) because the standards that put European academic fields under globalisation pressure are closely related to the American world of economics (Lebaron 2014). European academic groups use these features, such as formal orthodoxy and the paper form, to challenge power relations within their local and national contexts. From this perspective, an "international culture" exists to which German economists want to adapt their way of being economists. We will call these (American) scholars "international scholars" type N (natives) because the US is the original ("native") place of reference for economics as a globalised culture. Or, to put it in world system terminology, it is the "centre" of the dispositif to which the cultures of the semi-peripheries and peripheries aspire but never reach.

Nevertheless, economics at the peripheries and semi-peripheries aims to adapt to the standards of the centre, and it thereby enters into dialectics of desire for power and distancing subordination, it tends to the iron cage of opportunism and distance. The elite culture that results from these adaption processes in the UK and in Germany is not identical to how economists in the USA act and behave. Institutional contexts, including the jobs market, the repertoire of academic positions across Ivy League, state universities, and colleges, access to publications, languages skills and so forth determine how economists in the US must act in order to get recognised, not only symbolically by many scholars worldwide (and an endless number of discursive images), but also by those actors who are able to give them jobs, because some international activities can turn out to be irrelevant for certain positions, especially at the global centre. In contrast, international recognition at the semi-periphery can be translated into local capital, but this is not necessarily the case. Many transformations (e.g. through citations and so forth) are needed. Local and national institutional features are still closely connected to the institutions of the nation-state, the region, or the municipalities, and only a few economists are able to move across national contexts, free of institutional restrictions. Most of them use their international capital to obtain a position within their original national university system outside the US, as the study of Rossier, Bühlmann and Mach shows in the Swiss case (2017; Heredia 2018; Klüger 2018; Schmidt-Wellenburg 2018, in this issue).

Now, a second type of academic culture emerges. These scholars can be called "international scholars" type M (migrants), because they are usually expected to "emigrate" to the centre and "immigrate" back to the semi-peripheral institution. These scholars convert international experience, positions, and other insignia of academic (im/e)migration into local capital. Yet, the migrant culture does not simply develop out of a local field. This type of academic culture results from a discursive communication and exchange process between different national fields, which are now, at least from the European perspective, possible because they are part of a globalisation dispositif. What appears as an "elite economist" in Germany, Switzerland, or the UK is a hybrid social actor. The culture which these actors represent, is embedded within a certain elitism dispositif that covers entire practices and structures, such as graduate schools, departmentalised institutes, elite myths, and the particular social networks in which these people are embedded.

This dispositif is characterised by a high degree of inequality and domination, even if the entire field cannot be reduced to the dominating cultural practices of academic elites at the top of the social hierarchy. Economists that are excluded from elite positions in Germany (and the UK) can be analysed as a third type of academic culture. These academic actors are usually involved in small epistemic cultures. They are parts of local networks and recognised scholars lacking global visibility. Most of them have a family and spend a certain amount of time on things that are not related to high scoring journal publications. Some of them go into politics, obtain positions in certain commissions, become commentators in newspapers, or write books on public issues. But most of their academic life will be spent as a regular professor at a small or medium-size university or other higher education institution. This academic culture can be called "international scholars" type L (locals), because their institutional base is located in local contexts. These scholars are neither excluded nor included, since they belong to the dispositif (not excluded) but they are not involved in the interrelated activities of rule-setting at the centre and rule opportunism at the semi-periphery. The place of these locals can be an appropriate place for resistance to the centre, especially for those who strive to the middle classes by crossing disciplinary boundaries.

This story of different cultures of economists can be expanded to different epistemic communities (e.g. the so-called "heterodox economist"), to national fields on the periphery of the capitalist world system (Babb 2003), to the huge fields of consultants and applied economists ("politician economists," "consultant economists" and so forth; see Schmidt-Wellenburg 2013; Wansleben 2013), and to the media performances of star economists. All these different cultures, positions, and fields are related to each other and interwoven in a network of power, inequality, and communication, since the trans-epistemic field is the morphological background to academic as well as non-academic economists.

One position refers to another position in an infinite regression: "star economists" in the media are backed up by an elite myth produced by "elite economists" while the "locals" teach huge numbers of students; "politician economists" relate to academic economists because they can use their status as scientific capital in the political field. The "locals" appear as regular professors from a certain perspective because they are part of the same globalisation dispositif, e.g. European "elite economists" are merely a global middle class striving for a top position, at least from an American perspective (reflected by high salary differences between economics professors in the USA and Europe). The regular professors develop a certain identity and understanding of their institutional and imaginary position because they recognize their colleagues at local "first class" institutions. The same applies to top positions in the American field at certain Ivy League departments. They are powerful positions because others desire a particular image that the Europeans have in mind when they speak about "American" economics.

How should we grasp this difference between local scientific positions and global academic images theoretically? According to Lacan's discourse theory (Lacan 1990), it should be understood as an *imaginary* constellation. In contrast to institutional positions, imaginary positions create misunderstandings and mismatches between different cultures. These cultures do not only compete for certain institutional positions, they also struggle over a place of desire as well within a global discursive universe. Globalisation processes, as we can observe in the multi-glossary structure of dissolving and re-embedding fields through discourses, operate, on the imaginary level of identity and position, on the basis of a certain desire. Desire is not identical to position in a social space, but it relates to a similar question since some images can be institutionalised as a professor position, while others cannot. It is the desire for a certain place that is always and already occupied by an imaginary other in a different field. When one starts to convert an imaginary position (discourse) into an institutional position (capital), the imaginary other disappears and a new other occurs. This infinite play of power and discourse is anchored and pushed forward by desire, and hence "libido" (Bourdieu 2000, 164), as the result of a constitutive contradiction between sedimenting fields and dissolving discourses.

Yet, while the emergence of this desire is not understandable without the fundamental social inequalities within and between academic actors in local fields, it opens up, at the same time, spaces for political revolutions and upheavals. Since economics provides the language for governing current global capitalism, the contestations, reflections, and practical underminings arising from the many critical disputes with it will be the starting points for the formation of future modalities of power and knowledge. The economics dispositive, analysed in this chapter, is the material result of a rather short historical process; and it is the starting point for upcoming (trans-)formations of economics as the political science, religious superstructure, and imaginary projection screen of global capitalism.

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