



# **Excellence Initiative Final Report Cluster of Excellence**



**Cluster of Excellence Cultural Foundations of Social Integration**  
**Exzellenzcluster Kulturelle Grundlagen von Integration**

EXC 16

University of Konstanz

Excellence Initiative / Exzellenzinitiative

Final Report / Abschlussbericht

Cluster of Excellence / Exzellenzcluster

Cultural Foundations of Social Integration

Kulturelle Grundlagen von Integration

EXC 16

Host University: University of Konstanz

DFG Project Number: 24060127

First Funding Period:

1<sup>st</sup> November 2006 – 31<sup>st</sup> October 2012

Second Funding Period:

1<sup>st</sup> November 2012 – 31<sup>st</sup> October 2019

## **Final Report for Cluster of Excellence**

Cultural Foundations of Social Integration

Kulturelle Grundlagen von Integration

EXC 16

**Host university:**  
**University of Konstanz**

**Rector of the host university**

**Coordinator of the Cluster**

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# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>General Information .....</b>	<b>5</b>
1.1	Summary .....	5
1.2	Key data .....	7
1.2.1	Host, speaker and other participating institutions .....	7
1.2.2	Overview of the Cluster's structure .....	7
<b>2</b>	<b>Research .....</b>	<b>8</b>
2.1	Premises and forms of research.....	8
2.2	Exemplary returns .....	13
2.3	Research perspectives .....	50
<b>3</b>	<b>People.....</b>	<b>60</b>
3.1	Impact of the Cluster on academic positions.....	60
3.2	Promotion of early career researchers .....	65
3.3	Promotion of gender equality.....	72
<b>4</b>	<b>Structures .....</b>	<b>76</b>
4.1	Organization and management of the Cluster.....	76
4.2	Relationship between the Cluster, the host university and the participating partners .....	85
4.3	Sustainability .....	87
<b>5</b>	<b>Overview of the Cluster's Resources.....</b>	<b>89</b>
5.1	Resources .....	89
5.1.1	Staff.....	89
5.1.2	Infrastructure.....	90
5.2	Expenditures.....	91
<b>6</b>	<b>Comments to the DFG .....</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Appendix A (Non-Confidential) .....</b>	<b>99</b>
7.1	Most important publications of the Cluster .....	99
7.2	Additional achievements.....	106
7.3	PIs and other participating researchers.....	112
7.4	Participating institutions and cooperation partners.....	112
7.5	Doctoral researchers .....	114

# 1 General Information

## 1.1 Summary

The Konstanz Excellence Cluster Cultural Foundations of Social Integration (EXC 16), which was established in 2006, focused on an issue of great topical relevance that it approached through a set of theoretical premises. With its core concepts of 'culture' and 'integration', the cluster connected questions stemming from cultural studies and the social sciences, framed by a broader group of disciplines ranging from philology to history, philosophy, sociology, political science and legal studies. In the initial proposal for the first humanities and social science cluster in Germany, two decisions were made that proved to be fundamental for the orientation of the cluster throughout its funding period, up to 2019. First, 'culture' was understood as a relational, heterogeneous field of forces with diffuse borders, rather than as a spatial-holistic phenomenon. Second, 'disintegration' was placed alongside 'integration' as a concept of equal foundational significance. This explains a characteristic resemblance in the results of cluster research. As a dense network that was able to establish an environment of mutual inspiration and collegial critique, the cluster functioned as an interdisciplinary enabling ground for disciplinary research. Hence, from the beginning, there was no attempt at centralized pre-defined conceptual terms or integrating such terms into a synthesis in the sense of a grand theory.

Within the scope of EXC 16, the University of Konstanz established five new permanent professorships: four full professorships (W3) with the official designations 'Cultural Theory and Methodology', 'Social and Cultural Anthropology', 'History of Religions' and 'History of Knowledge of the Humanities and the Social Sciences' as well as one junior professorship (W1) with tenure option in Social and Political Anthropology. In keeping with the provisions of the Excellence Initiative, the cluster was set up in such a way that a significant portion of its segments could exist beyond 2017. It was designed neither as a large-scale collaborative research centre nor as a loose association of projects, but rather as a complex institutional framework of professorships, (international) fellowships at the *Kulturwissenschaftliches Kolleg*, research projects as well as support for doctoral and master's students. The cluster had outstanding successes especially with regard to the careers of individual female colleagues. Its culture of quality drew upon the established procedures at the University of Konstanz that included internal and, where necessary, external evaluations and developed these procedures even further. Cluster structures blended organically into the university so that several of them have, as planned, been maintained seamlessly and continue to support the university's research priority in cultural studies. State sustainability funding will be used primarily for the Cultural Studies Research Centre (*Zentrum für kulturwissenschaftliche Forschung, ZKF*).

## Zusammenfassung

Der 2006 eingerichtete Konstanzer Exzellenzcluster Kulturelle Grundlagen von Integration (EXC 16) behandelte ein politisch und gesellschaftlich brisantes Thema in grundlagen-theoretischer Form. Mit seinen beiden Kernbegriffen „Kultur“ und „Integration“ verband er kultur- und sozialwissenschaftliche Fragestellungen in einem Fächerverbund, der von den Philologien über die Geschichte, Philosophie, Soziologie und Politologie bis zur Rechtswissenschaft reichte. Im Einrichtungsantrag des bundesweit ersten geistes- und sozialwissenschaftlichen Clusters, der auf andernorts eingeworbene Verbünde in vielerlei Hinsicht modellbildend wirkte, wurden zwei für den gesamten Förderzeitraum bis 2019 wegweisende Richtungsentscheidungen getroffen. Erstens wurde „Kultur“ als ein relationales, heterogenes Kräftefeld mit diffusen Grenzen statt als räumlich-holistische Größe aufgefasst. Zweitens wurde dem Begriff der „Integration“ sein Antonym „Desintegration“ als gleichursprünglich zur Seite gestellt. Daraus erklärt sich eine charakteristische Familienähnlichkeit der im Cluster erreichten Resultate. Er fungierte als interdisziplinärer Ermöglichungsgrund für disziplinäre Forschung. An eine zentralistische Festschreibung von Begriffsdefinitionen und die Zusammenführung zu einer Synthese im Sinn einer *grand theory* war deshalb von Anfang an nicht gedacht.

Die Universität Konstanz hat im Rahmen ihres EXC 16 fünf neue dauerhafte Professuren eingerichtet: Vier W3-Professuren mit den Denominationen „Kulturtheorie und kulturwissenschaftliche Methoden“, „Ethnologie und Kulturanthropologie“, „Geschichte der Religionen“ und „Wissensgeschichte der Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaften“ sowie eine W1-Professur mit tenure-Option für Ethnologie mit Schwerpunkt Politische Anthropologie. Den Vorgaben der Exzellenzinitiative gemäß war der Konstanzer EXC 16 von Beginn an daraufhin ausgelegt, dass ein signifikanter Anteil seiner Segmente über 2017 hinaus fortbestehen kann. Er war weder als großdimensionierter Sonderforschungsbereich noch als lockerer Verbund temporärer Projekte der Beteiligten entworfen, sondern als komplexes institutionelles Gefüge aus Professuren, (internationalen) Fellowships in seinem Kulturwissenschaftlichen Kolleg, Forschungsprojekten sowie Doktoranden- und Studierendenförderung. Herausragende Erfolge zeigten sich insbesondere in den Karrierewegen von einzelnen Kolleginnen, auf deren intensive Begleitung besonderer Wert gelegt wurde. Seine Qualitätskultur orientierte sich an den in Konstanz seit langem etablierten Verfahren der internen und im Bedarfsfalle externen Evaluation und entwickelte sie weiter. Demgemäß fügten sich seine Strukturen und Abläufe organisch in die Universität ein, so dass einige von ihnen wie geplant nahtlos fortgeführt werden und den kulturwissenschaftlichen Schwerpunkt der Universität weiterhin unterstützen können. Die Mittel der Landesnachhaltigkeit werden wesentlich für ein Zentrum für Kulturwissenschaftliche Forschung (ZKF) verwandt.

## 1.2 Key data

### 1.2.1 Host, speaker and other participating institutions

**Table 1: Participating institutions (last funding period)**

Host university	Location
University of Konstanz	Konstanz

### 1.2.2 Overview of the Cluster's structure

**Table 2: Structure of the Cluster**

Unit (research area, platform, etc.)	Title	Research discipline and direction (if applicable)
Research area A	Identification and the Politics of Identity	
Research area B	Practices of Knowledge and Non-Knowledge	
Research area C	The Cultural Modelling of Hierarchy and Violence	
Research area D	Cultural Dynamics of Religion	
Institute for Advanced Study	<i>Kulturwissenschaftliches Kolleg</i>	Annual central research topics
Cluster professorships / junior professorships with tenure option	1. History of Religions 2. Ethnology / Cultural Anthropology 3. Cultural Theory / Methodology 4. History of Knowledge of the Humanities and Social Sciences 5. Economic Cultures, university-funded in 2010, cluster-funded 2011-2012 6. Ethnology / Political Anthropology	1. History / Sociology 2. History / Sociology 3. Literature 4. History / Sociology  5. Politics / Public Administration  6. History / Sociology
Junior professorships with tenure option	1. Domestic Politics/Public Administration 2. Romance Literatures 3. Economic History	1. Politics / Public Administration  2. Literature 3. History / Sociology
Guest professorship	Cultural and Social Anthropology	History / Sociology
Junior Research Groups (first funding period)	1. Conflict Generators 2. Genesis of Norms under Globalization 3. Idioms of Social Analysis	1. Politics / Public Administration 2. Law 3. History / Sociology
Junior Research Group (second funding period)	Revolts as Communicative Events in the Early Modern Period	History / Sociology
Doctoral programme	Cultures of Time	
Doctoral programme	Europe in the Globalized World	

Master's programme	Studies in European Culture	
Master's programme	International Administration and Conflict Management	Politics / Public Administration
Research platform	Network Transatlantic Cooperation	
Research platform	Cultural Theory and Theory of the Political Imaginary	
Lectureship (Arabic) and research platform	Konstanzer Orient-Forum (KOFO)	
Research groups	Associated research groups, research training groups, research initiatives	
University Press	Konstanz University Press (KUP)	
Decision-making bodies	Executive board / plenary assembly / scholarly advisory committee	
Coordination	Academic / executive coordination, administration	

## 2 Research

### 2.1 Premises and forms of research

The Konstanz Excellence Cluster Cultural Foundations of Social Integration (EXC 16), which was established in 2006, focused on an issue of great topical relevance that it approached through a set of theoretical premises. With its core concepts of 'culture' and 'integration', the cluster connected questions stemming from cultural studies and the social sciences, framed by a broader group of disciplines ranging from philology to history, philosophy, sociology, political science, and even legal studies. In the establishment proposal for the first humanities and social science cluster in Germany – which served as a model in many respects for other funded networks – two decisions were made that proved to be fundamental for the orientation of the entire funding period up to 2019. First, 'culture' was understood as a relational, heterogeneous field of forces with diffuse borders, rather than as a spatial-holistic phenomenon. Second, 'disintegration' was placed alongside 'integration' as a concept of equal foundational significance.

The research of EXC 16 was situated in a fundamental tension between the contemporary pressures related to this issue and the necessities of scholarly research. At all levels – from the demands of familial and neighbourly coexistence up to political questions of global measure – integration continues to be perceived in social discourse as an urgent issue and this perception was intensified significantly by the so-called refugee crisis in Europe beginning in 2015. The scholars conducting research in the cluster also faced this urgency and grappled with it in



events and publications and in part in research projects and interventions relating to everyday political issues. Nevertheless, the cluster always understood itself as a research network oriented around theoretical reflection that combined approaches grounded in both cultural studies (what in German is termed *Kulturwissenschaften*) and the social sciences with long-term historical examinations. Its immediate goals were neither political consulting nor the elaboration of concepts for practical application. With all necessary openness to current social developments, the cluster's programme outlined in the initial proposal called for distance from everyday politics and mass-media driven trends. The focus instead was the critical analysis of key concepts in the debate and verifying their validity. This was the case in particular for the very concepts used in the cluster title, that is, culture and integration. In the establishment proposal written in German, two important theoretical decisions were made in this regard: first, the rejection of a container concept of culture based on a set meaning that guaranteed commonality; second, a relational understanding of the term integration that was not primarily normative. The proposal stated:

The planned excellence cluster presumes the following working hypothesis: in light of recent developments, not least in connection with processes of globalization, descriptive models for decentred organizational modes of social life have to be found and this is an important challenge for the social sciences, history, cultural theory and epistemology. Thus the theoretical decision to treat integration and disintegration as observer-dependent and, in many respects, overlapping processes, rather than normatively privileging the concept of integration is tied to a corresponding inversion of the concept of culture: 'culture' should not be primarily charged with ensuring social consensus, but rather should encompass the continuum of all degrees of deviation within practices and discourses and thereby produce a surplus of possibilities, without which – this is our presumption – societies cannot react with sufficient elasticity to their own internal non-uniformity and contingency.

These initial theoretical decisions have proved their value over the past years. In terms of cultural theory, what was up for discussion in the research design of the cluster was nothing less than the significance of cultural processes and their relation to social structures. In this regard, we had to bear in mind that the use of the term 'culture', the invocation of a cultural core identity and the derivation of conflicts, for example, from religious-cultural differences constitutes a highly political act that determines a variety of subsequent operations. For this reason alone, it was impossible to regard 'culture' as one subject area alongside others (for instance, economy and politics). Instead of an ontological definition – discussions in the cluster confirmed this – we should ask when and why references to culture become increasingly significant and how this is subsequently conceived.

To this extent, research in the cluster was committed to a basic tenor of constructivism. It has been pointed out since the 1980s that many social phenomena, especially those of a conflictual nature, that had been previously tied to political or economic causes were now deemed to be cultural. However, it had by no means been determined in advance the extent to which the growing importance of the signifier 'culture' could be traced back to a change in the course of conflicts or to the semantics of conflict – in other words, whether this was an actual or a discursive displacement and what the precise interactions between the two might be.

It was thus one of the learning processes of the collaborative work at the cluster that attributions of 'culture' and 'religion' should not simply be accepted as facts and welcomed as an expansion of the jurisdiction of cultural studies. Rather, these are discursive operations that frequently create the relations they speak of in a virtually decisionist manner. One prominent example of this is Samuel Huntington's famous phrase 'the clash of civilizations', which was gratefully adopted and instrumentalized by ethno-nationalists of all stripes. From the beginning, the cluster decided against such a model of homogeneous blocks in large or small, and also against the notion of 'culture' as a separate social sphere. Instead it was argued in the initial proposal that 'culture should be regarded as a kind of universal communication medium, in which social actors can address the relativity of their mutual life forms and experiences.' This definition was then elaborated:

If 'culture' is understood as the enabling ground of communication in unsettled parameters, then it is not sufficient to obligate it, following a widespread understanding of the term, solely to a prior community of language, religions, education, etc. Instead such approaches must be expanded to include a conception of culture informed by the theories of difference and dissent that is applicable in situations where communities cannot be presumed.

This approach was based on the view that precisely modern societies, given their dense structural integration, can afford to demand consensuality as the grounds for expanded coexistence only to a limited degree and with limited depth. In the cluster's research, using the model of 'culture' as an interface rather than a container proved extremely fruitful for two reasons. First, such a concept of culture incorporates within itself praxeological and institutional analyses. It directs attention – again to name a current and obvious example – not only at how a German 'identity' or 'culture' is manifested in the questions of a citizenship test, but also at how this test is used and the administrative rules tied to it, including all the dissonance between administrative regulations and everyday practice, between official announcements and silently tolerated (or powerlessly ignored) immigration. The issue is thus less a compact unity than the tangle of political, quotidian, legal and administrative-technical signals that immigrants encounter as 'German culture'.

Second, an approach that conceptualizes cultures from their margins and contact zones, that is, as an ensemble of practices exercised in very ununified and often contradictory ways in various dimensions – spatial, life-world, aesthetic, ideological, institutional – opens up a broad field of historical analysis. In this regard, it can be demonstrated that the lost unity and the dreams of its resurrection are simply a myth, one that generates major political reverberations especially (but not only) in Europe. Less consensus and the suspension of forced unity, however, can also be observed in previous cultures in which Islam or Christianity predominated and were probably also the reason for a functional coexistence there – under the conditions of de facto multiculturalism and multi-religiosity prevailing in Europa and Western Asia prior to 1500.

Despite the thematic and methodological breadth of the disciplines represented in the cluster, the cooperation resulted in a great number of shared theoretical premises. These were not expressed, however, in a unified conceptual vocabulary. That would not have been compatible with the consciously decentralized, network-like arrangement of the cluster or with its substantive pluralism. Only some of the projects were organized explicitly in terms of cultural theory. Nevertheless, there was a far-reaching commonality in the sense that no fixed categories were established in advance for the respective objects of investigation; instead conceptual terms were derived from the materials themselves, inspired by innovative developments in other disciplines.

A common credo of cluster research was that the two core concepts – culture and integration – were conceived from their intrinsically processual nature, thereby fluidifying them to a certain extent, rather than employing them with holistic and normative claims. ‘Integration’ was investigated in connection with disintegration; ‘culture’ was understood as a tense polarity of de-culturalizations and re-culturalizations. This explains a characteristic resemblance in the results of cluster research. The cluster functioned as an interdisciplinary enabling ground for disciplinary research. From the beginning, there was no attempt at centralized pre-defined conceptual terms or integrating such terms into a synthesis in the sense of a grand theory. This would not have accorded with the specific characteristics of cultural studies. As a dense network that was able to establish over the years an environment of mutual inspiration and collegial critique, the cluster had no pre-determined, binding research agenda that would have spelled out the responsibilities of its members. For this reason, it was able to grow with and adapt to the dynamics of personnel changes and of new research orientations. It dispensed with the ideologically-laden tension between collaborative research and individual research, not least by re-focussing on the form of the monograph. Furthermore, one of the lasting achievements of the cluster was a cooperative style that was at once quality-conscious and liberal. This especially inspired the international fellows at our Institute for Advance Study, the *Kulturwissenschaftliches Kolleg*, and will also shape future cultural studies in Konstanz.

The initial proposal identified four research areas that were continued in the extension period in modified form and with new accentuations. In research area A Identification and the Politics of Identity, which initially was called Cultures of Identity, processes and constellations were investigated in which the question of actors' political, ethnic and religious affiliation had become a social factor relevant to integration. In this way identity was no longer presumed – as it had been in the establishment proposal – as a self-understood benchmark of human behaviour, but rather was relativized and dynamized as an option of both active and passive ascriptions. Research area B united projects that investigated Practices of Knowledge and Non-Knowledge in their relevance for processes of social integration/disintegration. The original focus on narrative theories was expanded to the examination of the semiotic mechanisms through which societies deactivate disruptive knowledge and deal with the simultaneously creative and precarious potential of non-knowledge.

Research area C The Cultural Modelling of Hierarchy and Violence focused on the cultural dynamics that arise from asymmetries of power and property and also affect their functioning. While in the first funding period phenomena of transculturality stood in the foreground, in the second funding period attention was also directed at the conditions in which hierarchies are destabilized and space allotted to scenarios of violence. Finally, research area D was the Cultural Dynamics of Religion. The projects here focused on processes of differentiation and de-differentiation, in which religious communities are formed, become institutionally anchored and hybridize and transform each other. In the first funding period this was based on the hypothesis, confirmed by empirical historical work, that the boundaries between denominations, religious movements and monotheistic belief systems, as well as between the ethnic, cultural and religious self-ascriptions of participating actors have always been more porous than these appear in their own narratives and in our models.

These research areas were not conceived as compartmentalized segments of cluster research. In our experience, such compartmentalization would not have been compatible with the requirements of trans-disciplinary research in cultural studies. This would have made it more difficult to promote cooperative activities that are intrinsically motivated and arise from the requirements of the topics involved. The research areas were instead arranged in such a way that they were open to scholars from all of the disciplines participating in the cluster and did not stipulate new ideas and research interests, but rather encouraged, mobilized and bundled them. Accordingly, they served as contact zones that kept the individual projects in conversation with each other both thematically and methodologically, as sources of inspiration rather than as domains to be exhaustively researched. While the issues guiding the cluster were outlined in this way, the scientific burden of proof ultimately lay with the individual research projects.

The special character of the Konstanz cluster's research structures is also reflected in the remarks below. The positive returns of the individual projects are evident in the large number of publications, which can be summarized here only in an extremely selective and exemplary form. The programmatic framing of cluster research provided an inspiring context that was developed in the interdisciplinary exchange and was reflected in the publications, but did not itself have the character of a project. This self-conception was expressed early on with the following axiom: the cluster does not do research. Instead, the cluster established in the years of its existence its own culture of interdisciplinary conversation and research, which in addition to joint publications focused especially on monographic projects and the international resonance of research results. Renowned professors as well as postdocs and doctoral students found different forums to discuss their respective works in progress. Major lectures that served primarily purposes of prestige were intentionally held to a minimum. In contrast, manuscript workshops, research discussions, and other concentrated forms of exchange were expressly supported – in exemplary form at the *Kulturwissenschaftliches Kolleg*, our Institute for Advanced Study. A large number of qualification projects, articles and monographs arose in an atmosphere of open and constructive criticism with the regular incorporation of international expertise, as was especially the case at the Institute for Advanced Study, but also in the Network Transatlantic Cooperation attached to the institute. World renowned scholars who inspired the excellence cluster – exemplary in this regard were sociologist Philip Gorski, anthropologist Michael Taussig, political scientist H. Brinton Milward and literary scholar Gabriele Schwab – participated in these intense discussions during their stays at the institute. The research projects of cluster members also profited from this.

## **2.2 Exemplary returns**

The range of publications (see Appendix A, section 7.1 below) documents the enormous scholarly productivity supported by these cooperative forms of varying density and commitment. The publications are distributed over the entire disciplinary spectrum and not infrequently developed across our predefined fields of research. In addition to the intensive choreographed joint focuses – for instance, within the scope of the annual topics at our Institute for Advanced Study – relationships and correspondences often developed only in the course of the research and thus could not be predicted in advance. This was in fact the strategy of an institution that never presumed to claim exclusively for the cluster the publications of cluster members. For this reason, in most cases it is difficult to quantify precisely the degree to which the environment created by EXC 16, the scholarly inspiration or the financial support contributed to the published results. This was true especially of the monographs that external fellows at the *Kulturwissenschaftliches Kolleg* were able to work on or even complete during their time in Konstanz. To name but a few examples, Carola Dietze's pioneering study of the invention of

terrorism in the 19th century (Dietze 2016), Friedrich Lenger's opus magnum on the history of European cities in the era of modernity (Lenger 2013; the book was an important factor in Lenger being awarded the Leibniz Prize in 2015), Niels Werber's highly praised monograph on social insects (Werber 2013), and most recently Caroline Arni's historical study on the epistemic function of the unborn in the human sciences (Arni 2018) and the social history of the Christian Middle East in late antiquity and the early Middle Ages written by Institute alumnus Jack Tannous (Tannous 2018). The same holds for the numerous books and articles that Aleida and Jan Assmann wrote as members of the cluster and for which they were awarded two renowned prizes, the Balzan Prize in 2017 and the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade in 2018. Jürgen Osterhammel, speaker of the first doctoral programme established in the cluster (Cultures of Time), published his encyclopaedic *Verwandlung der Welt* in 2009 (which appeared in English translation as *The Transformation of the World* in 2014) to euphoric praise beyond the bounds of academic history departments. He was awarded the Leibniz Prize in 2010, and later, after leaving the excellence cluster, the Balzan Prize.

This final report is intended to present the dynamics of the cluster in terms of its personnel as well as its research and to outline how these developed over two funding periods within the cluster's specific institutional structures. For this reason, the thematic fields sketched below do not follow any specific canonic and familiar systematic approach, but rather seek to make comprehensible what can result from a research network designed as an enabling ground for its participating researchers, where individual interests sparked by a shared topic are encouraged to interact with each other in the search for new questions and new answers.

### *Entrance and presence*

The cooperative research project Cultural Poetology of the Theatrical Entrance, conducted by literary scholar Juliane Vogel together with Christopher Wild of the University of Chicago, demonstrates in exemplary form – and particularly impressively – the effectiveness and viability of the opportunities provided by the cluster. As a trans-Atlantic research tandem, the two came to the *Kulturwissenschaftliches Kolleg* to explore the dramatic structural moment of the entrance, the formal processes that occur when arrivals happen and newcomers enter into an existing situation or an existing social setting. What presentation possibilities are available to newcomers? What power does the receiving society have? What formal sequences regulate arrivals? How can literary and especially dramatic texts be read in regard to this question? The project succeeded in conceptually establishing the entrance as a structural element of drama and theatre within the discourse of literary theory as well as transferring it to other social spheres of action. The concept of the entrance protocol has in the meantime become an established term. The project itself resulted in two monographs and two anthologies that provide important insights into social and

rhetoical figuration processes, about the way that the arrival of strangers is imagined and managed. The contributions to the volume *Auftreten. Wege auf die Bühne* (Vogel / Wild 2014) document the results of discussions held in four workshops by participants from German studies, classics, and theatre studies. A subsequent anthology edited by Bettine Menke (who was also a fellow at the Institute for Advanced Study) and Juliane Vogel, *Flucht und Szene. Elemente eines Theaters der Fliehenden* (Menke / Vogel 2018), demonstrates through an overview of the history of drama how dramatic texts in all historical cultures model 'entrances in flight' (*Fluchtauftritte*), how societies imagine situations of arrival and reception and which protocols entrances by refugee have followed in the present and in the past.

Two related dissertations were also completed, one that investigated entrance protocols in operas of the 17th and 18th centuries (Kappeler 2016) and another that examined, beginning with the reversal of triumphal entrance protocols in Roman tragedies, the afterlife of the Senecan entrance form up to Shakespeare (Bernice Kaminski, manuscript completed, not yet submitted). The second monograph was written by Juliane Vogel herself. Her book *Aus dem Grund. Auftrittsprotokolle von Racine bis Nietzsche* (Vogel 2018) also explores the entrance within the genre of tragedy. In the historical period addressed in the book – the transition from courtly to modern theatre – Vogel describes the act of entering as the manifestation of a dynamic figure-and-ground relation. She begins with the ceremonial protocols of courtly theatre and places the tragic figure's desire to make an entrance in a tense relationship with the tragic ground. This remains pervasive as a horizon of extermination in the plot and prevents the figure from being completely realized. The tragic entrance is defined by the fact that it anticipates, at the moment of the triumphal appearance, the future destruction. The book moves from Racine's dramaturgy of the 'profondeur' to Nietzsche's *Birth of Tragedy*.

Vogel grounds this tragic-historical line of development in a structural transformation of European society, one that Rudolf Schlögl, speaker of the excellence cluster, conceptualized in his outline of a societal history of the early modern era (Schlögl 2014). Schlögl's research on a history of social structures in the early modern era begins with the question how a continuous, self-dynamic increase in complexity emerged in European society beginning in the 16th century. His answer, to summarize briefly, is threefold. First, Schlögl notes that through specialization and refinement – as occurred, for example, in European courts beginning in the 15th century – 'face-to-face communication' proved to be extraordinarily powerful in co-ordinating expectations. This efficiency was then substantially increased through the use of writing and printing, even if these initially were used primarily as media for storage rather than communication. Until the 17th century, the inclusion of people who were absent in interactive communication (i.e., non-face-to-face communication) was by no means self-evident and was regulated by the form principles of

face-to-face communication. Second, this fundamentally changed only with the increasing institutionalization of instruments of social ordering in the form of organizations, through which the generalization and co-ordination of expectations became possible in a temporally-stable, spatially expansive and, above all, functionally specific manner. Third, this presupposed, however, new medial forms of social self-observation in a media system based on the printing press that became, beginning in the 17th century, increasingly closed to interaction. Within this media system, concepts of social self-description circulated that no longer emanated from a hierarchical order threatened with decline, but instead developed future-oriented, dynamic notions of social connections.

### *Religion and cultural diversity*

The second monograph Rudolf Schlögl completed during his time with the cluster, *Alter Glaube und moderne Welt* (Schlögl 2013), allows us to identify further features of EXC 16's operational mode that fostered a productive intertwining of very different forms of cooperation and mediation, this time on the field of research on religions. These features had particularly positive effects on the international dimension of the Konstanz working environment, which was pursued overall more from the perspective of appealing forms of cooperation rather than inevitable competition. With support from the cluster, an Italian translation of Schlögl's study was completed (Schlögl 2017) and an English edition is currently being prepared by Bloomsbury Publishing. The book itself outlines a societal history of religion in the modern era following the conceptual leitmotif of secularization. Despite its ideological burdens, the notion of secularization still appears indispensable for an examination of the relationship between religion and society, at least in Europe. Beginning in the late 18th century secularization became a central category, through which religion determined its relationship to the world and through which, conversely from a social perspective, the possible location of religion in the world could be defined. Schlögl's monograph, which was an important contribution to research field D Cultural Dynamics of Religion, corresponds conceptually with Talal Asad's book *Formations of the Secular* from 2003, which recently appeared in German translation. Asad's book, which quickly became an international classic, was published in 2018 as *Ordnungen des Säkularen. Christentum, Islam, Moderne* by Konstanz University Press, which was founded by EXC 16 with support from the university (see section 4.1 below). The translation costs were paid by the cluster, which assumed an international intermediary role here and in other cases. Care was taken not only that publications completed within the Konstanz cluster were translated into English and numerous other languages (including French, Dutch, Italian and Spanish), but that works were also translated into German, for example, foreign-language texts included in a reader on the international history of the theory of secularization that was edited, introduced and commented by Christiane Frey, Uwe Hebekus and David Martyn. This



anthology will be published in near future by Suhrkamp Verlag in Berlin and will round out the analyses of the concept of secularization in Konstanz.

As implied above, the combination of disciplines participating in the cluster meant that joint discussions continually oscillated between references to the present and to the past. This meant, on the one hand, that recent issues at times guided historical research and provided impulses. On the other hand, however, it also contributed to a new historical relativization of perceptions of contemporary problems. The results of this can be seen in exemplary form in the research around the cluster professorship entitled 'History of Religions', which was held until 2017 by Dorothea Weltecke, now at the Goethe University Frankfurt. Weltecke completed her important monograph *'Der Narr spricht: Es ist kein Gott'. Atheismus, Unglauben und Glaubenszweifel vom 12. Jahrhundert bis zur Neuzeit* (Weltecke 2010) during her initial time at the cluster. A unique experiment was also conducted at this time: namely, exploring the history of Jews, Christians, Muslims, heretics and Pagan cultures in their interactions, their demarcation processes and their conflicts during the period between 500 and 1500 CE (cf Weltecke 2016). The fact that neither theology nor Near Eastern studies were among the participating disciplines in Konstanz proved, paradoxically, to be an advantage because it allowed this period be investigated without the inhibiting disciplinary boundaries that otherwise separate the fields of Near Eastern and Medieval studies, Eastern Christianity and Western Christianity. This domain had not been hardened by traditions and jurisdictions, which meant that new paths were possible, especially for a working group on religion (*AG Religion*), established in the cluster in 2008 and comprised of colleagues from anthropology, history, sociology, and literary studies with their respective methodologies (on the results of this group, cf Kirsch / Schlögl / Weltecke 2015), as well as a multi-disciplinary thematic focus at the Institute for Advance Study on Religious Minorities, comprised of specialists from Germany, France, Great Britain, Spain and the United States for an academic year in Konstanz. Only in this environment was it possible to establish a medieval research field that had been non-existent in this form in Germany prior to this: an integrated religious history of the 'era of monotheistic religions (500–1500)' in western Eurasia and in northern Africa – in a conscious departure from the opposition of 'Europe' vs 'Orient'. Here the focus was exploring cultural connections and studying both commonalities and traditions of conflict as well as disrupting inhibitory traditional narratives (Christian Occident – Muslim Orient).

It has become clear from recent church history as well as from Jewish studies and Islamic studies that religions were much more fluid and fluid for a much longer time in regard to their sacrosanct traditions than is indicated in their own narratives and in our models. Demonstrating this point was not merely a scholarly concern. As long as European Judaism and European Islam of the past have not been included in the historical narratives of Europe and become part of its

historical identity, it will be difficult to imagine a plural European society of the future. The latter will always appear as a break in tradition that will be experienced at least by a part of society as a loss. The world of the so-called Middle Ages in particular is presented in retrospect as ordered and unified – as a unity of Christianity, a unity of religious beliefs, a unity in relation to another closed unity, the world of Islam. That, however, is a myth. In reality, the world has from time immemorial been much more powerfully mixed, much more complex and much more integrated than the dominant narratives depict. Multi-religiosity and syncretism – as years of cluster research on this domain have demonstrated – were the historical norm, and mono-religiosity is a fundamentally ephemeral condition that was never realized in Europe long-term despite the efforts and the violence. Seen in this light, many conditions of the present day – the organization of social and religious affiliation, multi-religiosity as a market place, religious fanaticism as well as religious tolerance – become phenomena that have countless parallels in the past.

Daniel G. König was appointed Dorothea Weltecke's successor in 2018. With professional training in European medieval history and Islamic studies, his research spans the wider field of relations between Latin-Christian Europe and the Arabic-Islamic sphere, thus fulfilling the same prerequisites of representing a wider perspective on religious phenomena that goes beyond the traditional field of medieval history. Having written a dissertation on the spread of Christianity in late antique and early medieval Latin Europe and a habilitation thesis on the Arabic-Islamic documentation of medieval Western Europe, König's research is based on the two primary source languages Latin and Arabic. The social and cultural implications resulting from the interaction, entanglement and interpenetration of these two linguistic systems constituted one research focus in the past years and forms the basis of future research projects in the field of medieval studies. Currently Daniel König and his research associates are involved in several research projects, all of which address the cluster's main theme in one way or another, either by analysing cultural factors that produce processes of group formation and social cohesion or by analysing forms of transcultural interaction in spheres defined by Christianity and Islam. In a general atmosphere marked by debates about Islamist terrorism, Islamophobia, right-wing populism, and Europe's relations to highly volatile socio-political constellations in the southern and eastern Mediterranean, this research is of particular public relevance. Due to its transcultural approach, it probes historical and current definitions of 'the self' and 'the other' by highlighting the relevance of cultural transit zones and third spaces characterized by hybridity, without neglecting, however, that certain historical constellations were also marked by bipolar, exclusivist worldviews and corresponding actions. A particular focus lies in the legacy of the medieval period and its distinctive role in shaping dichotomizing definitions of Christian-Muslim and relations between 'Islam' and 'the West'. For in spite of the fact that medieval and early modern relations between European Christendom and the Islamicate sphere were characterized by many forms of

cooperative relations, particular processes such as the Arabic-Islamic expansion, Latin-Christian expansionism as well as interreligious polemics still mark relations today within the frameworks of conflicting memory cultures of particular historical events. While fully focused on a meticulous and unbiased historical analysis of medieval phenomena, the research programme of the professorship considers these contemporary repercussions of historical phenomena and is thus dedicated to contributing to a more nuanced public debate on the basis of historical material.

The agenda of the cluster, however, was situated not only at this tension between the pressure of contemporary events and relativizing historical comparisons, but also at two further points of tensions: one between the perspective of modern Western societies and the experiential horizon of non-modern or non-European and non-Western cultures; and a third tension between empirical findings and reflections on cultural theory. Research area B Practices of Knowledge and Non-Knowledge, originally oriented around narrative theory, drew important intellectual impulses from these latter two fields of tension. The establishment of two anthropology professorships (see section 3.1 below) proved significant because only in this way did ethnographic perspectives on non-Western practices become possible. In his ethnographic study on the informal economy in urban Tanzania, Alexis Malefakis (2019) argues, for example, that street vendors experience a complex interplay of cooperation, rivalries and conflicting communal ties. Most importantly, he demonstrates that the 'groupness' (according to Rogers Brubaker) of cooperating street vendors is fragile because, paradoxically, they feel that they are *too* familiar with and knowledgeable about each other. This leads to their perception that the street vendors they are close to cannot be trusted because one would not trust oneself if one were an outsider. Hence, in this case study, one's (assumed) identitary similarity with others has socially disintegrative effects.

That an intrinsic desire for knowledge about others is a basic prerequisite for sociality has been questioned by another anthropological project in the cluster. Criticising the assumption, widely held in social theory (e.g. Georg Simmel), that humans have a natural desire to know, Thomas Kirsch (2015) suggests that concealment is not a sufficient criterion in and of itself for defining secrecy. Instead, in contrast to privacy, secrecy presupposes the existence of (real or imagined) Others who have or are alleged to have an interest in the disclosure of what is concealed from them. Taking the example of religion in Africa, Kirsch shows that these 'epistemophilic Others' are not already out there prior to acts of secretiveness, but are performatively constituted and thus brought into (virtual) existence through acts that are classified in that way. For example, by treating the herbalist medicine used by them as a secret and by claiming that there exist many people who are interested in having it revealed to them, healers in Zambia insinuate in an act of self-aggrandisement the existence of epistemophilic Others in relation to the 'secret lore' of their

own religious expertise. In this way, the social exclusion of certain groups of people enacted through secrecy accompanies the discursive construction of an imagined community of epistemophilics.

Judith Beyer's ongoing research can also be associated with the guiding topic Religious Minorities, which was originally oriented in the cluster above all historically. Ethnographic research on relations between the religions in Myanmar has hitherto focused primarily on the conflicts between the Buddhist majority and the Christian minorities in the northern regions and the struggles of Buddhists and Muslims in the western coastal and border region. In contrast, urban relationships and interactions even in the former capital Yangon in the south of the country have rarely been investigated. Beyer's project examines the strategies that Muslims, Hindus, and Christians have developed to safeguard their communities vis-à-vis the state, the city administration, the neighbourhood and other individual actors. These non-Buddhist religious communities in Yangon have to actively claim their right to exist as communities in public space. For this reason, Beyer's research is particularly focused on people's self-understanding as a community, on their inward and outward presentation as a community, as well as on the central role that their religious buildings (churches, mosques, temples) in the city centre of Yangon have come to play in this context.

#### *Narration and social reality*

Albrecht Koschorke's work, which was pioneering for the cluster, also contributed to research area B 'Practices of Knowledge and Non-Knowledge', although it moved, similar to the anthropological research, far beyond it. In recent years Koschorke concentrated on three monographs: *Wahrheit und Erfindung. Grundzüge einer Allgemeinen Erzähltheorie* (2012, translated into English as *Fact or Fiction: Elements of a General Theory of Narrative*, 2018), *Hegel und wir* (2013) and *Hitlers „Mein Kampf“. Zur Poetik des Nationalsozialismus* (2016, with Portuguese, Danish, English, Turkish and French translations). In terms of the cluster's agenda, these works deal with the narrative or cultural semiotic foundations of integration, for better or for worse. Koschorke is especially interested in disengaging the concept of 'foundations' from misguided ideas. In contrast to conventional assumptions, he argues that social cohesion does not arise through the establishment of a normatively consistent foundation, to which all individual social actions can be traced. Even in strictly empirically terms, the idea that the societal circulation of symbols and signs is organized through such a facile centring is untenable. In *Fact or Fiction*, Koschorke attempts to develop an alternative model, in which various kinds of validity systems overlap on different levels of abstraction and with different scopes – systems, moreover, in which the density of validity is not uniformly distributed, but usually decreases at the margins, so that cultural semiosis is set in play across

a plethora of loose ends and diffuse transition zones. Only in narratives is the 'reality' of society available to participants in its fluidity and multi-dimensionality.

There is also a third finding based on the observation that social bonds are produced through the co-existence of deviating and frequently conflicting normative pairs, thus through contradictory guiding semantics – and indeed contradictory in the specific sense that they formulate, as a final consequence (that is largely disguised socially), imperatives that are incompatible with each other. So much evidence for this can be found that we might be inclined to speak of a cultural-semiotic axiom: self-contradiction binds, while non-contradiction dissolves and separates. This predicament is most clearly evident in the paradoxical instructions of religion – for instance, the Christian image of humanity based on the idea of the human likeness with God and the simultaneous prohibition on wanting to be God. However, large-scale political semantics also contain within themselves a tension between incompatible orientations that mutually relativize each other in a way that cannot be resolved with pure logic. Thus, a kind of double bind or 'doubled conditioning' arises that creates cultural leeway precisely though the fact that it allows no lasting resolution. Prominent examples of this are the double ideal of freedom and equality in modern societies or the distinction, hardly less conflictual in borderline cases, between legality and legitimacy or between the immanent and transcendental sources of law.

In *Hegel und wir*, Koschorke addresses the problem of the narrative foundation of political order in a different way. The guiding question here is why Hegel was able to do what we apparently can no longer do today: Create a great myth of unity that participates in the creation of what it claims to depict. The book presumes that, except for the difference of scale, there are many parallels between Prussia after 1806 and Europe after 1945. However, while a philosophy of history – and with this a narrative centring of Germany-Prussia – was possible and even plausible on a world-historical level, something comparable appears to be impossible for contemporary Europe. If we generalize this finding, then we need to investigate the basic circumstances in which this kind of narrative centring gains the required collective resonance and those in which it does not. One possible answer is that weakly integrated social structures in particular require a narrative foundation. Accordingly, Koschorke argues for an understanding of Europe that takes into account the high degree of interdependence and coordination – structural, technological, legal-administrative, economic etc.– between the countries of this continent, even if this is reflected insufficiently in the political imagination. Given this presupposition, it should be considered an advantage that Europe is represented only in weak narratives, as is characteristic in general of federal structures, while narrative closure and military reinforcement usually go hand in hand on the level of nation states.

The general thesis that structural and narrative integration do not occur synchronously, but rather inversely proportional to each other, implies a tendency to nostalgia that arises almost automatically with comparisons of the present to the past and is also evident in academic grand narratives in the sense that earlier societies are supposed to have been more integrated, more strongly religious, more transcendently secure etc. This nostalgia, characteristic for modernity as a whole, arises from the fact that such structural coherence is incorrectly deduced from the hierarchical-compact self-images of premodern societies – and, conversely, the scattered self-images of modern societies lead to the equally incorrect conclusion that these societies are in the process of structural dissolution. Koschorke's observations, insofar as such sweeping statements can be made at all, point instead to the opposite. The more powerful administrative – and to growing degree also technological – micro-regulation of modern social spaces dispenses with the necessity of accommodating shared meaning and accordingly allows greater scope for dissent on semantic levels. Consequently, what looks like anomie and a 'crisis of meaning' is only the obverse side of this structurally dense coordination. This should be contrasted with the nostalgic tenor of talk about progressive disintegration or, under a somewhat different rubric, the theorem of a continually secularizing modernity. From this perspective, the dissociation of public space through the Internet and social media also needs to be re-evaluated.

#### *Autocracies, violence and administration*

Albrecht Koschorke's book-length essay on Hitler was the result of a longer examination of the poetics of dictatorships that was supported by the cluster (cf Koschorke / Kaminskij 2011). The formation of a totalitarian society, according to the core thesis, is due less to a coherent ideological foundation that its committed followers adhere to than to its incoherence, which provides the members of its new elite possibilities for self-empowerment. The assumption that ideologies are monolithic systems of coercion is contradicted by the textual evidence of virtually all dictatorial writings. This implies general consequences about the character of ideologies, which, according to Koschorke's findings, should be analysed less in terms of an ostensible ideal substance than of their operativity, of which decisionism is the most striking feature.

The body of the anthology *Tyrants Writing Poetry* – originally published in German by the Konstanz University Press in 2011 and subsequently translated into Russian (2014) and English (2017) – consists of studies on different dictators of the 20th century. The book begins, however, with a long essay by ancient historian Ulrich Gotter about Nero, who in Roman historiography and subsequent accounts became the model case of a despot who combined a taste for art with cruelty. Gotter does not simply provide a critical recapitulation of this reception history, but instead uses Nero's artistic self-presentation to depict the specific operative mode of Roman autocracy all the way back to Augustus. In its semantic core, this consisted of the explicit denial

that the newly established regime was a monarchy at all, although there was no doubt at the same time that the will of the one man outshone the power of every other institution. This structural incoherence obligated all participants to strictly observe the roles that they had been given in the collectively conducted theatre of consensus. The recognition of an autocrat by Roman elites, essential for stabilizing order, was based on public service, a reputation of excellence that the autocrat had to acquire, preferably on the field of battle. Within this constellation, Nero's new attempt (which remained an episode) to gain recognition for his imperial role through artistic accomplishments can be explained from the specific starting conditions of his rule. His public appearances, as Gotter shows, obeyed a political calculus within Roman performance culture and should not be misunderstood as the mere expression of an artistic creative urge.

Gotter's contribution represents a pilot study within a larger project network on ancient autocracies in cross-cultural comparison that in recent years included doctoral students, postdocs and fellows at the *Kulturwissenschaftliches Kolleg*. The concept of social role, or more precisely, the Roman concept of *persona* was constitutive for these investigations. Grouping the history of sovereigns around the notion of *personae* means consistently starting with the communicative exterior of political actors, that is, placing at the centre of the investigation the ruler's image, as it was staged, communicated and commented on in the relevant Roman public spheres. The methodological requirement here was to ask not about individual attitudes and convictions, but rather about the context and functions of the public negotiations: The ruler was thus perceived not primarily as a person, but as a role (or accumulation of roles). With a view, for instance, to Juliane Vogel's investigations of appearance cultures and Rudolf Schlögl's conception of early modern face-to-face society, we see once again the extent of terminological interconnections and correspondences between different projects and disciplines that was attained in the joint work of the excellence cluster. The publication strategy of the autocracy group can also be considered representative of the aims pursued by the cluster overall, not to appropriate relevant partial results for an overarching book series, but rather to concentrate on forms of distribution adequate to the diversity of disciplinary cultures. With support from the cluster and together with colleagues from Princeton and Heidelberg, Ulrich Gotter established the international book series *Studies in Ancient Monarchies*. Books that arose in Konstanz on the constitution of the military persona of the first Roman Princeps Augustus (Havener 2016) and on the practices of an ancient anti-monarchical discourse (Börm 2015) have been published as part of this series.

Research on post-dictatorships was the focus of another very successful project that Kirsten Mahlke, professor of Cultural Theory and Methodology, brought to the cluster. For Mahlke's ERC Starting Grant *Narratives of Terror and Disappearance: Fantastic Dimensions of the Argentine*

Collective Memory after the Last Military Dictatorships (1976-1983), funded from 2010 to 2015, the cluster played a significant role as research environment and source of diverse inspirations, as host, idea giver, and guarantor of autonomy and incentives for international fellows and as theory reference and communication platform both internally and externally. Mahlke's recent work, which has focused in particular on cultural theories and artistic productions of Latin America, also represented the geographical opening of cultural studies in Konstanz that was energetically supported by the cluster: Mahlke has sought to integrate the Southern Hemisphere into the interdependent European history of modernity through research on Latin-American decoloniality and postcoloniality. Post-dictatorship research made necessary in this respect a specific form of cultural integration: The integration of social phantoms, the *desaparecidos*, into the social narrative of Argentina beginning in the mid-1980s (cf Mahlke 2016, 2017). The field of social narrative forms, associated in the cluster especially with Albrecht Koschorke, and memory research as practiced by Aleida and Jan Assmann provided the interdisciplinary project with theoretical and substantive milestones for research on the functions and representational forms of fantastic narrative structures in the production and dissemination of terror as well as in the cultural integration of people who disappeared and their history in contemporary Argentinian society. Thanks to the research-friendly interdisciplinary cluster environment, the possibility of leaves of absence and conferences as well as the many stimulating encounters with fellows at the *Kulturwissenschaftliches Kolleg*, the project was able not only to convincingly pursue its substantive goals of mediating an approach between literary studies, social science and political science and contributing to the thematic expansion of the discourse about those who disappeared, but also operated quite successfully in regard to personnel recruitment. The participants of the ERC project now all have permanent academic positions and have been awarded numerous prizes. The group has consolidated and can continue working on the research field initiated in 2010 through another ERC Starting Grant entitled 'We are all Ayotzinapa: The Role of Digital Media in the Shaping of Transnational Memories on Disappearance', and was obtained by former project member Silvana Mandolessi of Katholieke Universiteit Leuven. The fantastic dimension of the disappearances as an essential condition for creating fear and for representation has been mapped out by the group headed by Kirsten Mahlke in empirical research and literary studies comprising more than sixty articles, four conference volumes, films, a novel and reviews.

This dual interest in the functioning of Argentinian state terrorism and in the imaginary representative modes of its afterlife is exemplary of a specific form of examining phenomena of violence inspired and made possible by the cluster. Corresponding studies were frequently guided not only by programmatic impulses from research area C The Cultural Modelling of Hierarchy and Violence, but also drew significant stimuli from the narrative, communicative and



practice-theoretical vocabulary of research area B Practices of Knowledge and Non-Knowledge. The conscious rejection of rigid institutional segmentation in the cluster's agenda proved especially beneficial here. For example, the research programme of the junior research group Revolts as Communicative Events in the Early Modern Period, initiated and led in the second funding period by historian Malte Griesse, aimed not so much at the genuine violent dimension of revolts, but rather at their communicative potential to introduce fundamental negotiations in the delineation of the common good and the legitimate transformation of power relations. The group conceived revolts as cathartic events and reflective catalysts that unfolded their effective force especially in the course of communicative adaptations and renderings in pamphlets, treatises, diplomatic correspondence and pictorial representations. Similar to Carola Dietze in her transnational history of the invention of terrorism as a new form of political violence beginning in the mid-19th century, the junior research group was careful not to adopt a comparative perspective that would artificially isolate from each other the revolts occurring throughout Europe. In the early modern era, domestic revolts were primarily subject to a rigid regime of *damnatio memoriae* after their suppression, while the depiction of foreign revolts could be used liberally to project internal relations onto re-narrations that were filtered or arranged as need, thereby making domestic affairs available reflectively. In an article on the French and Swedish reframing of the Moscow Uprising of 1648, Griesse impressively demonstrates the narrative procedures and phantasms operative in the circulation of knowledge, half-knowledge and non-knowledge about early modern revolts (Griesse 2018).

The approach taken by the Revolts group and its results converged with studies conducted within the scope of the cluster on the performative and communicative logic of ancient civil wars and their narrative representation (Börm 2016, cf Ferhabd begović / Weiffen 2011). The broad temporal span of this research made it possible to include very different constellations and compare them with each other. This allowed not only a characterization of various specific effective conditions, but also the identification of strikingly different civil war cultures, understood here as the sedimentation of civil war events in latent dispositions implemented in repeating scenarios. The political dispositifs for internal conflict were very different in Greece and Rome throughout the epochs. While in Greece internal war was virtually endemic on the level of the communitarian face-to-face societies and serially and expectedly dismantled political communities, in Rome, by contrast, major historical events (for instance, systemic battles or usurpations) were required, which broke out in the political centre, but extended to a significantly lesser extent into the individual communitarian units. Under these conditions, the closure of civil war scenarios occurred much more easily in the Roman context, for instance, even if – or precisely because – the transgression of the internal conflict was commemorated as traumatic. In Greece, the adversarial constellation remained latent even after the end of the actual bloodshed.

The research of political scientist Wolfgang Seibel focuses on the political role of formal organizations, public administration in particular and the role of organizations in politics. His research agenda shared with the overall programme of EXC 16 a focus on the ambiguous role of formal rationality in political and organizational life. Seibel's interest in occupation regimes dates back to late 1990s and continued well into the existence of EXC 16. His focus was Western Europe under German occupation from 1940 to 1944 and the impact of various types of occupation regimes in the Netherlands, Belgium and France on the persecution of the Jews within the framework of what the Germans had euphemistically termed the 'Final Solution to the Jewish Question'. Here Seibel's research agenda was driven by the multiplicity of political and organizational rationalities that occupation regimes had to respond to and the ways in which these rationalities were connected to the implementation of mass crime and mass murder. Contrary to what both conventional wisdom and the better part of the relevant literature suggest, occupation regimes were far from being monolithic or strictly hierarchical in nature. Nor should one imagine that persecution and mass murder were based on a rigid organizational performance in terms of hierarchical effectiveness with murderous ideology. Rather, Seibel has argued repeatedly that the uncertainty regarding occupation regimes in general, the mutual dependence of the occupying power and the representatives of the occupied country or territory as well as the rivalry between various agencies and administrative units were as instrumental in creating the pernicious impetus and effectiveness of the Holocaust as formal hierarchy combined with ruthless anti-Semitism. This research was supported by the cluster in various forms, including a fellowship at the *Kulturwissenschaftliches Kolleg*, financial assistance for book publications and guest scholarships for foreign cooperation partners. Two major book projects resulted from this, one monograph on the 'Final Solution' in France 1940-1944 and an edited volume on 'the precarious state' of Nazi government and administration, which Seibel produced with contemporary historian Sven Reichardt (Seibel 2010, Reichardt / Seibel 2011). This research, especially the analytical approach combining archive-based study with social-scientific theory (in particular organizational theory) would have been unthinkable without the framework and intellectual environment of EXC 16. Seibel's research as a political scientist has always been closely connected to the work of historians, but it became most effective and productive in an institutional framework based by definition on interdisciplinary cooperation.

One original impulse that emerged from EXC16 was the focus on disintegrating statehood and the role of international interim administrations that has shaped the conditions of the United Nations in the period between the end of the Cold War and the emergence of confrontational multi-polarity in the international order in recent years. The role of the United Nations in peacekeeping and peacebuilding and the structural consequences that have taken the shape of an international administration that assumes the task of what had otherwise been and should be

that of national governments and public administration is yet another phenomenon of multi-rational and ambivalent organization (cf Junk et al 2017, Welz 2016). EXC 16 sponsored a variety of activities in this particular field. Again, it is clear that multiculturalism is crucially important in an organizational environment shaped by international intervention into what – under the usual circumstances – would be domestic affairs. However, under the condition of UN peacekeeping and peacebuilding, it is an affair of the organizational autodynamics of the United Nations and its ambiguous relationship with local conditions in the target territories and the prevalent norms, expectations and patterns of legitimacy there. The research conducted in this area focused primarily on Kosovo, Sudan, or South Sudan respectively and Afghanistan. Within the framework of EXC 16, this was also closely connected to research on civil wars and other types of intra-state conflicts and conflict resolution.

This research and related activities such as workshops, internships, fieldwork, debating panels and major conferences were made possible by the infrastructure established by EXC 16, the *Kulturwissenschaftliches Kolleg* and its locations off campus in particular. Moreover, this was true not only of the intellectual exchange within and beyond EXC 16, but also of the cooperation with, and consultation of, practitioners from the United Nations and related national governmental agencies. When in the early 2010s the German Federal Government launched an educational programme targeting immigrants from war-torn Syria in an attempt to turn back the brain drain and establish the basis for a future ‘Leadership for Syria’ (which became the name of an entire programme), the University of Konstanz was the natural candidate for its institutional implementation. We were running the social science part of the programme in 2016/17 that involved no less than 20 professors and post-doc scholars from various departments with the Department of Politics and Public Administration in a pen-holder role and Seibel as scientific coordinator. ‘Leadership for Syria’ won nationwide recognition through widespread and positive media coverage and the particular appreciation of the Federal Foreign Office.

Seibel also participated in a group that was invited to the *Kulturwissenschaftliches Kolleg* for the guiding topic Bureaucracy in 2014/15. The group was composed of anthropologists, as well as literary and media scholars, political scientists and legal scholars. As part of this focus, the principal convenor, literary scholar and coordinator of the Konstanz research platform Cultural Theory and the Theory of the Political Imaginary Marcus Twellmann, launched an unusual French-German ‘theory transfer’ and was able to convince the cluster’s plenary assembly (see section 4.1 below) to fund a translation of Bruno Latour’s *La fabrique du droit. Une ethnographie du Conseil d’État* (2002) into German. This German translation was published by the Konstanz University Press in 2016 and was supplemented with an anthology that deals in detail and controversially with Latour’s legal study and its position within his overall project of an

'anthropology of the moderns' (Twellmann 2016). What was unusual about this border crossing was that not only the essence of this theory had to overcome terminologically delicate barriers, but it was simultaneously supposed to be accompanied by an empirical approach that could not be separated from it without losses as well as a specifically ethnographic research style. With their diverging commentaries and continuations, Twellmann and the other participants of this 'translation project' did not want to increase the velocity of theoretical discussions around Latour. They attempted to engage, insofar this was possible given their specialist backgrounds, the provocations of one of the most important social theorists of the present and his ethnographic research and modes of presentation. This resulted in a very fundamental critique from the perspective of legal studies and legal sociology, which argued that in observing administration Latour's anthropology of everyday administrative practices had overlooked the issue of rule.

#### *Social forms of integration of various scope*

The thematic summaries of results presented below are again exemplary of the smooth and yet effective choreography of cluster research. These works arose differently than the focus on bureaucracy, that is, without intense preliminary planning – determined in particular by the large number of projects dealing with social forms of integration on different levels and ready to engage in the specific constellations of EXC 16, especially the first research area Identification and the Politics of Identity. A cursory synopsis shows that the resulting publications were able to do justice to our original intention to privilege no particular level of integration, especially national or supranational, either conceptually or empirically, but instead to investigate phenomena of integration and disintegration in the greatest possible variety of scope and form. Even if the cluster did not in the final analysis succeed in producing a comprehensive and exhaustive archive of cultural studies research on integration and disintegration, its results over the years were impressive and can claim a certain representative character. Anyone who in the future would like to investigate the history of marriage, family and kinship, the cultural significance of neighborhood, village and city, the transformation of the old European category of 'house' or the formation of class in the 19th century will encounter EXC-16 research in reputable locations.

Many of these results were inspired by the guiding perspectives of research area A Identification and the Politics of Identity, which initially operated under the title 'Cultures of Identity'. Research here was supposed to investigate processes and circumstances through which identity becomes a social factor relevant to integration. The predominant concern was the open-ended, often improvised and controversial character of active and passive identification. The fundamental openness of identity-building processes was to be mapped by focussing on individual actors' self-positioning and sense of affiliation. Studies by social scientists, historians and literary scholars have confirmed the observation that personal and collective identity by no means represent a

constant reference point for social action. There are two reasons for this. First, every person and every group find themselves implicated in diverse, often disconnected and even incompatible social relations that admit no unified and unchanging identity. In order to do justice to alternating forms of address – whether conditioned by situation or role – social actors must to a certain degree behave incoherently, primarily in a spontaneous manner and without any awareness of it. This is possible to the extent that their identity is not rigid, but rather fluid and versatile. The strategic exploitation of such latitudes by collective subjects, in contrast, is called identity politics. Second, ‘identity’ should not be regarded as a quasi-natural, permanent condition of the self-consciousness of social actors, but can be described instead as the effect of a dramatization of difference. For this reason, ‘identity’ is also, counter-intuitively, a situationally dependent category. As a rule, it emerges where affiliations have come under pressure from polarizations that trigger corresponding compulsions to make decisions and commitments. In the civil conflicts of the 20th century and probably of the 21st century, modernization disparities perceived within society have frequently played an important role, especially between urban and rural. The hatred of the hinterland for multi-cultural urban cosmopolitanism, which ostensibly weakens or even dissolves traditional orders of an ethnic, cultural and religious kind, is among the most powerful driving forces of ideological radicalization.

Whenever a particular feature is made into the criterion for inclusion or exclusion, this guiding difference cuts through a multiplicity of existing (partial) communities, which must be devalued or ignored as a consequence. At the same time, new solidarities are created and synthesized into a diffuse sense of unity. Integration for the sake of a collective identity that occurs on a social operational level is accompanied as a rule by disintegration and the dissolution of participative structures on other levels. Accordingly, ‘identity’ is not a solitary category, but rather consists – depending to the point of view – of a range of partial commonalities, similarities or differences. It is strongly dependent on where the accent of the identification is placed. This opens up subjective as well as institutional scopes of action, which are reinforced by the fact that in many cases parallel semantics of equality (of all persons, all believers, all citizens) and of difference (between men and women, rich and poor, etc.) already exist, which can be weighted differently against each other depending on the context. Furthermore, this situation is almost always effected by the fact that multiple participatory possibilities and thus partial identities may be ‘selected’: for instance, entering into a kinship group or a marriage relationship can lead to affiliations that are at times competing and at other times complementary or overlapping.

Gabriela Signori’s historical monograph on marriage in the Middle Ages (2011) marked the chronological beginning. With support from the cluster, excerpts of this study were published in French in the journal *Annales*. There were also investigations that Signori co-directed on

medieval practices of naming, which identified kinship relations as a system of overcoded and thus fluid classifications (Rolker 2014). The approach that Signori took in her study of the transformation of medieval marriage – which was also characteristic of her work overall – was to examine elaborate discourses in their relation to everyday practices. This brought to light a surprising consistency of reflections on and practices of medieval marriage. The equality and consensuality of marriage, initially legitimated through the story of creation, was continued in the reception of Aristotle in the 13th century, but transferred to a secularized semantics. Previously based on the Bible, marriage came to be presented in the course of the socio-structural upheavals at the end of the Middle Ages predominantly as the smallest political unit, as a consensual form of rule among equals and in legal terms as a community of property.

These results also played a role in the second funding period, in which Signori and her research associates turned to the social and discursive history of medieval monasticism and the urban debt economy in the Late Middle Ages. One of the most recent results of this work was a special issue of the journal *Saeculum* entitled 'Kinless Worlds?', edited and introduced by Signori together with her Konstanz colleague Steffen Diefenbach (2018). In this volume, the authors critically revise the still widespread view that the consistent renunciation of worldly goods and hostility toward the family were essential features of monasticism. Ascetic discourses did become a structuring force in society beginning in Late Antiquity, but not in such a way that they formed a principle opposition to familial and kinship structures. One important finding of these studies was that cultural norms of hostility toward the family were appropriated, re-interpreted and developed very differently in order to assign ascetics and ascetic communities their place in a social world shaped by familial structures. Signori also shows how disputed this embedding could be in her depiction of the discussion of celibacy in the context of the Councils of Constance and Basel. Given the significant valorization of marriage, this discussion expanded into a fundamental conflict about radically differing models of society. While the late-medieval church was concerned in its resolutions with re-establishing an order increasingly endangered by clerical concubinage, pamphlets critical of celibacy left no doubt that marriage stood above all other institutions conceived and contrived by humans, for clerics as well as for lay people.

Under the title 'Precarious Economies', Signori examined the significance of credit relations of all kinds – from commodity credit to mortgage loans – for the circulation of goods and properties in the city beginning in the 14th century and published a monograph on the debt economy (Signori 2015), which was accompanied by related articles in German, English and French. Also evident in the examination of these urban economic connections are the dimensions of her study on marriage relevant to integration. Signori shows that this advancing economic, monetarized integration was supported (and had to be supported) by the formalized use of writing, normalized

and guaranteed by authorities. Only in this way was a social integration mediated by institutions and media possible in the medieval city. In contrast, into the 15th century oral marital agreements between families before witnesses predominated in marriages as a (contractual) relationship regulating the transfer between families and generations. While Signori emphasizes a semantics of equality between husband and wife that scholasticism derived from the story of creation, marriage contracts also clearly inscribed the patriarchal legal and economic discrimination of the wife. As a comparative summary we could say that the family, as a social system of close interaction, evidently relied on the oral self-commitment of participants significantly longer than individualized business transactions conducted in the medium of money and over greater social distances. The family was able to mobilize more resources in terms of solidarity, trust and certainly also sanctions than was possible in businesses. For this reason, the latter were dependent earlier on the use of writing.

Tracing the advent of economics as the doctrine of proper household management in marital life beginning in the late 14th century, Signori was able to identify an increasing materialization of marriage. The concept of the 'house' is also the focus of several published literary studies that arose in the cluster (for example, Ghanbari et al 2011). In the old European world of ideas, the issue of the 'social integration' of the house was raised within the context of doctrines of government. Research in the cluster has shown that the issue of household management (*oikonomik*) did not simply disappear around 1750, but was transformed into belles-lettres. A remarkable number of 'house' novels were published in particular in German in the 19th century, and these have usually been misinterpreted as family novels. After the end of the social form of the 'house' – which was tied in large part to the rise of a market economy and a market society – the concept of 'house' was taken up by cultural history and ethnology (*Volkskunde*), which, however, no longer use the term in the Aristotelian sense. Alongside the concept's spatial-domestic dimension, the genealogical aspect of the 'house' has increasingly become the focus here. For some time now, social anthropology and especially kinship anthropology have addressed the question of how the 'house' is perpetuated over time as an association encompassing ancestors and progeny. The 'house' has proved increasingly to be a 'total social fact', in which processes that were usually treated in isolation can be studied in their interaction.

Closely related to this topic was a 'collective monograph' on the boundary conditions of family discourse in the 18th and 19th centuries (Koschorke et al 2010). While the family has assumed a key function as a paradigm of integration in the self-understanding of modern European societies, fears of disintegration are, conversely, regularly tied to the idea of the decline of the family. The case studies contained in the volume begin with the observation that the family, contrary to its official self-image, is not fundamentally revealed by its intimate centre shielded from the outside

world. Any attempt to trace the historical contours of the family has to focus on its marginal zones, in which fictive relatives, step-parents, adopted children and godparents or servants employed in the household regularly cause anxiety in the bourgeois family as the intimate connection between parents and children. The ambiguity manifested in these figures about where the boundaries between belonging and not-belonging should be drawn has accompanied modern family discourse from the very beginning.

While at the *Kulturwissenschaftliches Kolleg*, Basel historian Caroline Arni was able to complete a book on another liminal figure of this family discourse: the history of the unborn in modernity (Arni 2018). In the late 19th century, French psychiatrists expressed an alarming suspicion: they had frequently observed physical and psychic abnormalities in children who were conceived during the Prussian siege and the bloody revolts in Paris in 1870-71. Could it be that the turbulent events and catastrophic experiences of those years had had a fatal effect on the new generation? This hypothesis adopted, on the one hand, an idea that had been familiar since antiquity, that of the formative power of the mother's mental state. On the other hand, Arni shows, beginning with this medical-historical episode, how physiologists, physicians, and psychologists declared the unborn to be 'preborn', how they identified in the life of the foetus the origins of a child's particularities and the beginnings of human subjectivity and how these connected the past and the future of society in the body of the pregnant woman. Arni reconstructs the different forms of this knowledge production, in which the concepts of 'development', 'influence' and 'transmission' were related to each other and marked a field that was increasingly organized around the notion of the 'prenatal'. The specifically modern dimension of this 'prenatal' is evident wherever it systematically bridged the gaps between the increasingly established disciplinary fields of embryology, heredity and developmental psychology. The question of generational transmission was in this way also tied to political concerns about social continuity. Thus, for the societies that in the 19th century began to comprehend their connection in the concepts of 'organization' and 'generation', integration became not only a synchronic task, but also a diachronic one. It became a question of the intergenerational transmission of characteristics.

Andreas Bernard published a highly regarded study on the new actors of reproductive medicine and the upheavals of the late-modern family order, focusing on sperm donors, surrogate mothers and artificial insemination (Bernard 2014). From the Ukraine through Germany all the way to California, Bernard sought out the crucial venues including sperm banks and laboratories, interviewed parents, donors and physicians about their motives and researched the fates of the children involved. What does it mean that an increasing number of children are no longer the result of the sexual union of father and mother, that sexuality and procreation have been decoupled from each other? What is the function of these third parties – sperm donors, surrogate



mothers, egg donors – who are placed between parents and their children in the course of conception and pregnancy? The technologies of assisted conception lead to a fragmentation of parenthood, which results in a complex network of relationships that require massive effort to order. Particularly revealing in this context are the legal strategies that are used to regulate the proliferating kinship relations. A multiplicity of regulations – from the mandatory anonymity of the sperm donor to visiting bans for the surrogate mother after the birth of the child – work to anesthetize the problematic social relations between the participants and to reduce the function of these third parties to the status of mere suppliers. The courts are aware of the precarious demarcation between the bodies and biographies of the strangers bound to each other in an existential way. It is hardly surprising that in the first twenty years of the history of surrogate motherhood, there have already been several cases in which this porous boundary did not hold up and the surrogate mother refused to turn over the child she had just birthed to the legal (here in the literal sense) parents. Before this backdrop it is also hardly surprising that the few fictional treatments of this subject in literature and film have concentrated on the porosity of the boundaries: defaulting surrogate mothers, sperm donors who search for their progeny, and half-siblings from the same donor who unknowingly enter into an incestuous relationship.

Taking another step, we can add to this iridescent spectrum of marriage, family, house and kinship the social forms of the neighbourhood, the village and the town, which were also investigated by members of the cluster. Our cooperation partners in Tübingen, Sandra Evans and Schamma Schahadat, published an anthology in 2011 that focused in particular on the emotional tensions that arise when spatial coexistence is organized as a neighbourhood, in other words, as social proximity (cf Heil 2014). The authors of this anthology confront promise of an intimate neighbourly community with the historical and literary reality of misunderstandings, conflict and alienation. The contributions to the volume show how the practices of the neighbourhood, caught between the ideal of voluntariness and the factual pressure to conform, become a socio-morphological paradigm for the contrary dynamics of identification and dis-identification. In addition to case studies about successful, failed, forced and even dangerous neighbourhoods, the volume also provides an historical outline of their differing theorizations and a critique of their ideological surpluses.

The village is a comparable, equally manageable social formation. In his major monograph on the global genre of village stories (Twellmann 2019a), Marcus Twellmann argues that beginning in the mid-19th century the village became the privileged space for action and imagination of social and literary modernization. Here Twellmann programmatically follows contemporary interpretations: he carefully adopts an emic perspective of ‘modernization’, contradicting a prevalent interpretation of the modern boom of village stories that sees in them no more than

‘idyll-ising’, sentimental compensations for the adverse consequences of social progress. If, however, we maintain the self-understanding of contemporary actors and their vernacular conception of progress, then the emergence of worldly, realistic village stories can be interpreted as an aspect of fundamental processes of state building, bureaucratization, industrialization and urbanization that can be summarized as ‘modernization’ (cf Neumann et al 2017). Using a multiplicity of examples, Tellmann also demonstrates that rural literature was incorporated worldwide into measures of social re-ordering and thus has lent an imaginary shape to the cultural tensions between ‘elites’ and ‘the people’ that were at times latent and at other times virulent. To dissolve this could mean, for example, being the author of a village story and making the affairs of the people your own in the mode of populist advocacy, with all the risks of disillusionment that such forms of projective identification bring for both sides.

A research project on the history of European cities since the mid-19th century, which historian Friedrich Lenger of the University of Giessen was able to pursue with support from EXC 16, also demonstrated the depleted interpretative power of the historiographical master narrative of modernization. Lenger’s urban-historical findings complement Marcus Twellmann’s study. While the literary scholar Twellmann accepts ‘modernization’ as an emic category for the village, the historian Lenger shifts his conceptual apparatus and prefers the term ‘modernity’. In doing so, he follows two sociologists who were also closely tied to EXC 16: Peter Wagner, a member of the scholarly advisory board during the first funding period and an internationally influential sociologist of modernity; and Andreas Reckwitz, a cultural sociologist previously at the University of Konstanz who was a principal researcher of the cluster and who in 2012 published his monograph *Die Erfindung der Kreativität*, an important building block of his own culturalist social theory of the present. Their sociological perspectives on modernity, which are sensible to contradictions and contrarities, helped Lenger to avoid the pitfalls of constructing a linear history of European cities. Thus, Lenger avoids misunderstanding urbanization as an epiphenomenon of industrialization. He is able to take seriously the integration of European cities into global networks and find an appropriate descriptive language for both the homogeneity and heterogeneity of urban societies in social, ethno-national and especially cultural terms, which helps uncover the various dimensions of marginalization and segregation in urban spaces. Finally, Lenger is also able to show under which conditions urban societies develop forms of the public sphere, which allowed for a peaceful treatment of contrary ideas and interests. In this regard his departure from modernization theory proves particularly valuable, as he is able to depict the lengthy and very violent course of urban conflicts, which strikingly contradicts the often cherished, theory-induced belief that urbanity produces in and of itself ‘indifference to difference’ (Karl-Otto Hondrich).

The city as the emergence space of a European imaginary was the focus of a research project by Andreas Langenohl, who headed the research group Idioms of Social Analysis during the first funding period and later, after being appointed professor of Sociology in Giessen, was invited to be a fellow at the *Kulturwissenschaftliches Kolleg* in Konstanz. Langenohl's research, which is representative of the cluster in its programmatic combination of conceptual rigour and empirical richness, led to a book-length study (Langenohl 2015) dedicated to a sociological analysis of town twinning activities in Europe and their share in the imaginary project of the European Union. Since the 1950s, politicians and political analysts have attributed town twinning paramount political significance in regard to anchoring the project of European integration in the political socio-culture of citizens in Europe. Proceeding from ethnographic and discourse-analytical methods within a practice-theoretical framework, Langenohl's monograph addresses the implied understandings of European integration and Europeanness that emerge from the concrete social practices involved in putting twin town cooperation to work. The underlying theoretical-methodological idea is that socio-cultural understandings of Europe are not necessarily the result of deliberate political or intellectual constructions, but emerge from social practices that they inform and at the same time are abstracted from. From this point of view, 'globalization' does not so much appear as a process that forces a European identity into the open, but rather that informs civic practices as these merge into identities. The book traces such practices within networks of twin towns spreading out between Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Spain, the UK, and the US. On the basis of participant observations and document analysis, and on the occasion of the transnational events organized by the twin town committees in the partner towns, Langenohl's book explores the political and cultural significance of joint workshops and excursions, cultural events, mutual visits and friendships. At stake are the understandings of Europe as they materialize on the occasion of jointly organized cultural events, in which nationalized culture fuses with a celebration of internationality; collective learning processes and their self-reflection on workshops concerning European themes including the integration of migrant minorities; social and cultural economies emanating from practices of circulating people, goods, and ideas between the partner towns; the logic of the gift and the counter-gift as a relation informing the transnational social space between twin towns; and attempts to make sense of aspects of globalization such as migration processes and political challenges originating outside of Europe.

Concepts obtain their semantic profile through the antonyms associated with them. One particularity of the concept 'integration' is that it can be defined in relation to two entirely different counter-concepts: disintegration and exclusion. 'Disintegration' describes a structural process. The term designates different stages of loosening, the dissolution and decline of social and systemic formations. Accordingly, in relating integration to disintegration there is usually a

normative emphasis. Then it means the maintenance, stabilization, pacification, consolidation or revival of a condition believed to be at risk or of an identity thought to be precarious. The conceptual pair 'integration/disintegration' can also be used in a more neutral and more analytically powerful sense. 'Disintegration' then does not necessarily mean an (impending) decline, but rather increased freedom of movement or options. 'Exclusion', in contrast, designates the refusal of integration as a symbolic act and as a social or political practice. Connected to this counter-concept, 'integration' gains an ethical dimension and aims at acknowledging a space in society for foreigners or excluded people. That such an imperative can hold also for an historiography of the working class is demonstrated by Patrick Eiden-Offe's study on the invention of the proletariat in the 19th century (Eiden-Offe 2017), which – there is no other way to put it – created a furore. The book can be traced back to a research project in literary studies that Eiden-Offe developed with Eva Blome and Manfred Weinberg in the first funding period of the cluster. Eiden-Offe was able to complete most of the study during a fellowship at our Institute for Advanced Study.

Eiden-Offe's book begins with the dismantling of the estate-based social order and the formation of a capitalist market economy in the Vormärz period, which also meant that the outdated imaginary ordering patterns of social life became increasingly uncertain. The 'social question' also raises the question of new social images, through which socio-economic transformation processes can first be made clear and comprehensible at all. Before scientific or sociological coping strategies can take effect here, literature and new literarizing forms of sociography come into play that deal productively with the epistemic turbulence of the times. As Eiden-Offe demonstrates, these diverse, often experimental and transgressive literary figurations do not so much reflect social relations as they introduce and shape new possible modes of perception. In this way the 'great transformation' – which is often abbreviated as the 'transition from (medieval) estate-based society to class society' – is presented on closer inspection as a complex process of radical disintegration. For authors from the 1820s to the 1840s, it became clear that the old ordering patterns could not be replaced by any new patterns of the same form. The condition of dissolution is the new order. The social bond had been torn apart and social integration only continued to take place as a negative, in the 'anarchy of competition' and finally in 'class warfare'. There was no society – this was the contemporary view – that could exist positively and independently of this conflict. The split, the struggle of the classes constitutes first and foremost the society that can never be invoked unproblematically.

In this situation it becomes all the more urgent, but also more precarious to identify functioning and vivid social images, to illustrate the real complexity and heterogeneity of social life and thereby to acquire imaginary and, wherever possible, politically operative entities. To deal with

this paradoxical task, which Eiden-Offe designates as 'poetry of the class', the entire wealth of forms and the virtuosity of advanced arts are deployed in the Vormärz period. In order to honour the poetic dimension of the socio-economic state of this class's affairs, Eiden-Offe mobilizes in particular social, literary and cultural history, which take into account not only the material 'base' processes of class formation, but also the history of the 'means of identification', the cultural forms of perception and representation, through which class figurations historically form and then dissolve. Eiden-Offe's historiographical (and political) sympathies here are with the excluded, those people who no longer belonged when that 'collective of a nationally determined, male-adult, white working class' formed from the 'motely crowd' of the Vormärz proletariat.

#### *Fundamental reflections – epistemology, methodology, history of knowledge*

Despite their diversity, the research results presented in the previous section share a theoretical bearing in the sense that they understand classificatory, communicative and economic parameters in the various fields not as an immutable a priori of social action, but rather as malleable and in movement. The following working hypothesis was assumed already in the initial proposal for EXC 16: 'that cultural mechanisms and regularities are effective even on the level of basal societal steering.' These governance elements include the epistemic and semantic processes through which societies develop a reflective relationship with themselves and can refer to themselves operatively. In other words, the socio-structural conditions can also be characterized as the object of cultural negotiations, in part in the literal sense and in part in a metaphorically expanded sense – which, however, does not mean that everything that is negotiated is also available and alterable.

Accordingly, the question of the cultural foundations of integration/disintegration repeatedly moves directly into epistemological and methodological considerations and requires conceptual labour, which was done in exemplary form in the ethnographic projects supported by the cluster. Several of these studies investigated how social worlds are established by and revolve around the shared use of specific discursive notions – although or even because some of these notions are characterized by semantic ambiguity. Tanja Thielemann's research on 'diversity' management in German business enterprises and non-profit organizations highlights the fact that 'diversity' not only constitutes an essentially contested concept (W. B. Gallie), but often also takes the form of an empty signifier that is promoted by 'diversity' managers to pursue a socially all-encompassing agenda. However, use of this notion tends to treat the various types of sociocultural differentiations (e.g. gender, race, age) on equal terms so that the markedly different constraints and capacities for agency associated with them become invisible. Thus, while the notion of 'diversity' is manifestly employed to activate people and to build communities that are open to integrating virtually everyone, it does so at the expense of the possibility of

hierarchizing different types of sociocultural differentiation and prioritizing the most pressing and problematic. Processes like these are not just a discursive phenomenon, but can also lead to the formation of large-scale institutional landscapes. This has been demonstrated by Tim Bunke, whose analysis builds on the observation that the category of 'human trafficking' has gained prominence worldwide since the UN adopted in 2000 the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. In the southern African country of Zambia, Bunke's ethnographic case study, dissemination of this notion led to the establishment of a wide range of civil society organizations aiming to eradicate human trafficking although, surprisingly, there is only one single case of human trafficking presently documented for this country. Both Thielemann's and Bunke's analyses thus provide fascinating examples for how empty signifiers can develop a life of their own, giving rise to different forms of new institutionalized socialities.

The fact that diffusion processes like these do not go uncontested has been pointed out by anthropologist Sarah Fuchs in her research on human trafficking in Senegal. In this country, the newly introduced policies against human trafficking are interpreted both against the background of historical experiences with colonialism and in the controversial context of public begging by young Quran students (*talibé*), who are fostered out to teachers in Islamic schools (*daara*) for many years. Some sections of Senegalese society welcome anti-human-trafficking measures as a new resource in the fight against the exploitative aspects of the *talibé* system. But others interpret these transnationally imported policies as a neo-colonial strategy for suppressing Islam. Thus, what some appreciate as laudable liberating policies is criticised by others for the hierarchy and structural violence implied in them. However, even if one finds resistance to the spread of a specific notion, any attempt to raise social support for countering it can be challenging. Thomas Kirsch (2016) explains the phenomenal global growth of discourses and practices of security by examining a peculiarity of the semantic field of this term. In contrast to thematically related notions such as 'war' and 'violence', whose antonyms 'peace' and 'non-violence' have positive connotations and are thus well-suited to discursively oppose 'war' and 'violence', the antonym of 'security' – namely, 'insecurity' – does not achieve the same effect. After all, it would be unusual in the extreme for anyone to argue for the desirability of more insecurity. Kirsch suggests that this semantic peculiarity regularly leads to situations in which those who oppose 'security' – for example, activists protesting against the securitization of European borders – find themselves in the predicament of having to come up with alternative antonymic constructions such as 'security vs freedom' and 'security vs human rights' to argue their case. However, this produces an asymmetric constellation: while 'security' tends to be presented as a natural and self-evident category, most of its opposites, including those mentioned above, require much more explication and substantiation – sometimes even programmatic statements – when they are used to

denaturalize security. Kirsch argues, in other words, that it is difficult to speak out against security without becoming enmeshed in complex questions of what a desirable social life should look like.

Judith Beyer's aforementioned second monograph on Myanmar, which she is currently working on, focuses in particular the analytic potentials and restrictions of the concept of 'community' (cf Beyer / Girke 2015). The conceptual aim of her book project is, on the one hand, to interrogate the way anthropologists tend to speak about 'communities' in general. Beyer's argument here is that anthropologists are quick to assume sociality and communal action while glossing over the existence of individuals. On the other hand, the book seeks to complicate the way scholars of Myanmar have looked at 'Burmese Indians', namely as ethno-religious 'communities' that consist of 'Hindus' and 'Muslims' respectively. In doing so, scholars have largely assumed an emic perspective and thus have failed to see both individuality outside of collectivity as well as the often strategic essentializing that individuals have come to display for various reasons or that have developed as unintended side effects of remaining in a position of structural inequality. In her first book on practices of 'customization' in Kyrgyzstan, Beyer (2016) worked out how ordinary people in Kyrgyzstan make use of law in the context of their everyday life. Based on long-term ethnographic fieldwork, this book demonstrates how actors switch legal repertoires in concrete social situations, invoking customary law, state law and Islamic law in order to present their case or lend their arguments authority. While legal texts are seldom consulted in village conflicts, importance is credited to skilful invocations of 'the law'. Legal repertoires are hierarchically ordered, with custom (Kyrgyz *salt*) being presented as the most dominant force in the village context. What counts as 'custom', however, is not age-old tradition or orally transmitted legal knowledge. Beyer argues that her informants constantly reinterpret the concept of custom in order to cope with the more large-scale political, economic and social change with which they are confronted. This rhetorical coping strategy did not begin only when they became citizens of a newly independent state in the 1990s, but existed much earlier even during pre-Soviet and Soviet times. In her book, Beyer thus not only presents fresh insights on 'custom' as an established concept of legal anthropology, but also critically reflects on the common usage of the label 'post-socialist', under which all Central Asian societies have been subsumed up to the present day. Her focus is neither the abrupt changes that set in when the Soviet Empire collapsed nor the social continuities that survived. Instead, she emphasizes peoples' creative ways of dealing with change and continuity by invoking custom as a powerful agent.

Beyer employed 'legal pluralism', especially in the sense of 'sensitizing concepts' (Herbert Blumer), in her study to investigate how Kyrgyz village inhabitants invoke 'the law' in conflict situations of various legal forms. Combining the approaches of legal doctrine and comparative law, legal scholar Michael Stürner focused on contemporary global legal pluralism. His project,

which he was able to work on at the *Kulturwissenschaftliches Kolleg*, was based on the thesis that an enormous reservoir of experience exists regarding modern conflict of laws that this steering potential should be used in an increasingly diverse legal reality. Given the immense plethora of state and private regulations today, globally active private parties can move virtually unimpeded from one legal order to another. This often occurs by exploiting a legal disparity, for instance, in the form of decreased liability standards. International Private Law (IPR) determines in the first place which liability regime these parties are subject to. IPR refrains in principle from its own valuations and is thereby blind to its effects from the outset. This blindness, however, can mean that private behaviour is judged according to a legal order in which there are no sanctions for misconduct. This is particularly evident in violations of universally applicable human rights. Stürner's research project thus seeks to contribute to the development of a conflict-of-law constitution that would ensure a specifically private-law protection of human rights by recourse to the vast experience of International Private Law as a conflict-resolution mechanism. Partial results from this project, in particular those of conceptual nature, were used in a legal study of the treatment of foreign law in German civil proceedings (Stürner / Krauß 2017).

Stürner also introduced important international debates on 'legal transplants' – that is, acquisitions of elements of foreign legal systems from a legal-historical perspective as well as a synchronous comparative-law perspective – to cluster discussions and was able to provide important impulses in the conceptual phase of a new interdisciplinary research initiative on Traveling Forms (see section 2.3 below). One of the fundamental and seminal experiences of the second funding period was observing the enormous productivity that developed from our joint understandings at the interference zones between the more classical disciplines of cultural studies such as anthropology, history and literary studies and a fundamentally normative discipline such as legal studies. The engaged and informed controversies around Bruno Latour's legal ethnography have already been recounted. Another volume should be mentioned in this context, a legal-historical anthology on the genealogy and topicality of 'res nullius', a legal formula used to designate objects belonging to no one – either originally or as a consequence of abandonment – which are thus free to be acquired exclusively (Kempe / Suter 2015). The complicated history of the application of 'res nullius', traced in this volume in exemplary stages, shows how unstable the distinctions between ownerless property, private property, common property were (and are). Thus, as Kempe and Suter note in the introduction, when land seizure, big-game hunting or mineral resources were at stake, it was always possible to declare common property to be ownerless property, which could as a consequence then be appropriated. Land seizures based on the legal title of 'res nullius' have by no means created a secure terrain in legal or political terms. They do, however, attest to the creative force of the formula: The re-definitions made possible by their use have not only been an expression of new power relations; they have



also created new legal objects and spaces and undermined traditional guiding differences. For instance, in regard to mineral deposits presumed on the ocean floor, this could also apply to the division of land and sea along a linear coastline. Even if the sea remained international waters, it could be argued with reference to 'res nullius' that land continues below sea level.

As part of EXC 16, legal scholar Daniel Thym recently explored the relationship between social cohesion and constitutional discourse. Here we can see how the practically-oriented approaches of legal policy and the research-oriented approaches of legal and cultural studies can strengthen each other, whether this be Thym's own work (Thym 2017) or his collaboration with cultural and literary scholar Özkan Ezli (Ezli / Thym 2018). Into the late 1980s, numerous legal scholars and political commentators still adhered to a comparatively conventional understanding of German 'identity'. This may have been due in part to the fact that the German partition rendered an identificatory re-positioning problematic within a divided nation state. For many years, public discussions and legal studies maintained a cultural-national interpretation. There was a widespread assumption that the liberal constitutional state of the Bonn Republic could access a homogeneity beyond the law, one that, depending of the author, was grounded in part ethno-culturally and in part procedurally. A *Leitkultur* or 'guiding culture', which was not enforceable in the constitutional-legal sense, was repeatedly presumed as the normative basis. With the transition from the Bonn to the Berlin Republic, the identificatory self-description of Germany was transformed. Due to the peculiarity of the German division, this new discourse of self-understanding had a 'catch-up' character in many respects. In the present day, recourse to a pre-political guiding culture is no longer possible in empirical terms on the basis of the current diversity and probably in normative terms from the perspective of the majority as well. It is no longer convincing to support the constitutional state through the established morals of a German cultural nation, because the Basic Law (*Grundgesetz*) and European treaties place the nation state on a civic foundation and secure domestic plurality by means of basic rights. Under the Basic Law, unity in diversity assumes the place of postulates of cultural homogeneity (Thym 2017). Nevertheless, we should be wary of constructing this transformation as a binary narrative – that is, as the history of progress from the past of a national sovereignty of ethno-culturally homogeneous communities to the future of an orientation around universalist values and constitutional principles that 'post-nationally' superimpose and dissolve the nation state. In regard to the development of the Federal Republic's self-understanding, we can say that the constitution today in part assumes in broader discourse the position that was occupied earlier by the idea of a Christian-grounded German cultural nation. The constitution is supposed to convey stability and orientation – even in terms of a guiding principle for the immigration society.

A contemporary constitutional patriotism, however, contains more presuppositions than it might initially appear. On the one hand, it is thwarted by those who respond to the plea for constitutional patriotism by staging cultural conflicts of social closure, which in their radical variants call into question the constitutional order as a whole. On the other hand, there is also the danger that questions that should be dealt with politically become depoliticized and moralized through an exaggerated connection to the constitution and the basic rights anchored in it. For a society in a permanent and continually accelerating transformation, the constitutional-legal orientation around values and procedures cannot base self-identification on ostensibly stable foundations, but must continually renew them. Such adaptations cannot be isolated from social discourse beyond the courts. A supreme court interpretation of basic rights that is not supported by broad discussion threatens to remain a 'hollow hope' (Gerald N. Rosenberg). It may possess tangible legal implications, but will only have limited power to shape the self-image of society. The focus on the state and the constitution must not succumb to any steering illusions concerning the question of social cohesion. Laws provide a framework, but the state cannot compel integration. At most, politics can actively engage in a future-oriented quest for public spirit by supporting certain attitudes and everyday practices. Here significant weight lies in the details of ordinary legislation, which is more accessible to political conflict than constitutional law. But equally significant, if more difficult to measure, is the social environment within which the development of law takes place. Securing social cohesion and public spirit thus cannot be outsourced to the state, but rather remains a civil-social responsibility and in the broadest sense a cultural responsibility. Law and civil society are mutually interdependent here (Ezli / Thym 2018).

As part of a cooperative project between EXC 16 and the city of Konstanz, Özkan Ezli also wrote a cultural studies expert report that was crucial in resolving a legally relevant dispute in civil society. This dispute in Konstanz centred on the wearing of burkinis in public swimming pools and was depicted repeatedly in public as a confrontation between a conservative Islam and open contemporary society. Only from a cultural studies perspective did the hybrid intermediate layers of the issue become visible: the burkini as 'Muslim' clothing that allowed Muslim women to go to swimming pools where men were present, something that the conservative interpretation of Islam opposes. According to Ezli's generalising conclusion, the burkini helps modern Muslim women create bridges between religion and majority society by allowing them to live their faith publicly and simultaneously break with a conservative understanding of Islam that seeks to keep women in general away from public swimming pools.

Moreover, Ezli co-edited anthologies, for instance, on historical and contemporary uses of 'integration', 'assimilation' and 'diversity' in scholarship and public discourse (Ezli et al 2013) and

more recently on the comedy of integration (2019). In his own research project, Ezli wrote a 'different' literary and cultural history of the Federal Republic of Germany from the 1960s to the recent past. The extensive book manuscript, submitted as habilitation thesis, provides a fundamentally new narration of this history, in which socio-political and aesthetic discourses intertwine, comment and transform each other, beginning with German-Turkish cultural production in literature and film and the branched integration debates of the Federal Republic. Ezli did not order his material into a continuous history of cultural enrichment and social emancipation, but rather emphasized the ruptures, new beginnings and transitions, which are only revealed when German and German-Turkish cultural production are not isolated from each other or from the vicissitudes of the integration concept (cf Ezli et al 2011).

Some of the results presented in this extensive rubric on fundamental reflections could also have been included in previous sections, while, conversely, material that has already been presented clearly contains fundamental theoretical implications. There were, for example, multiple cases in which cluster members examined aforementioned and other forms of social integration from a genealogical and decidedly historical-epistemological perspective, independent of their disciplinary affiliation to sociology, history or literary studies. It was in this context that a number of researchers in the cluster investigated the social form of the 'group'. Literary scholar Julia Amslinger published the first historical monograph on the constitutional phase of the *Poetik und Hermeneutik* interdisciplinary research group (2017). As part of a cluster project co-initiated with the German Literary Archive in Marbach that was completed at the Humboldt-Universität Berlin, Amslinger examined the papers of the leading founding members of the group, Clemens Heselerhaus, Hans Blumenberg and Hans Robert Jauss. While Amslinger does not ignore the legends surrounding the work of this unusual project and its results, her reconstruction concentrates on the relational fabric of the group, stabilized especially through correspondence. Amslinger shows the dream of a research community cherished by the participants in its real operational mode as well as its presuppositions – intellectual and theoretical, but also financial, bureaucratic and media-technical. Her archival work reveals in particular the enormous efforts by key group members to raise the protocolled conference discussions retrospectively through written correspondence to the high theoretical level that they had hoped group conversations would have, but apparently only rarely achieved spontaneously.

Anne Kwaschik, who holds the full professorship of the History of Knowledge that was established in winter semester 2017/18 within the scope of EXC 16, published a genealogy of area studies in the 19th and 20th centuries entitled *Der Griff nach dem Weltwissen*, which received cluster support for copy-editing and publishing costs (Kwaschik 2018). Current projects under Kwaschik's co-supervision include a history of references to 'nomadism' in the humanities

and social sciences (Sina Steglich), one on forms of factual and fictional narration in Near Eastern archaeology and their proximity to the narrative techniques of the historical novel (Kathrin Schmitt), as well as one on science organizers in the social sciences from the 1890s to the 1940s (Tommy Stöckel). In her transnational history of area studies, Kwaschik – who is currently working on a comprehensive reinterpretation of Robert Owen's and Charles Fourier's visions of the future – relativizes the Cold War as the primary context in which area studies arose, emphasizing the institutional and discursive continuities with the 'age of imperialism'. She illuminates in detail the role of 'colonial sciences' in the conception of area studies in Western Europe in the 19th century. She then shows how it assumed social-scientific and scientific-political contours in the 20th century in the United States and how these in turn shaped the establishment of area studies in Western Europe. The peculiarity of the post-war era, according to Kwaschik, lies especially in an organizational reformatting of area studies initially practiced in the United States. As a form of integrated and interdisciplinary group work based on projects, it assumed a pioneering role already noted by contemporaries in the implementation of a new kind of group ideology that was rarely questioned. The expectation was that individual findings about a region would be combined in the group discussions of project participants into an overall picture of the region that depicted more than the mere addition of its parts.

While Julia Amslinger and Anne Kwaschik portray the group primarily as an integration mode of interdisciplinary research based not least on fictions and ideologies, Nora Binder focused on the work of group psychologist Kurt Lewin as an influential attempt to elaborate the social-psychological foundations of democratic polities and to translate the ideals of democracy into a practical knowledge of governing. On the basis of publications, unknown and rarely viewed archival sources as well as the reconstruction of paradigmatic experiments, Binder investigates in her submitted dissertation the genesis of democratic change management, as Lewin developed it in his social psychology and tested it with group-dynamics action research in the United States during the 1930s and 40s. She traces the origins of the concept of group dynamics in Lewin's field theory and interprets it as a pastoral art of governing people. Her analyses show that Lewin and his co-workers were able in their experiments to produce behavioural changes by manipulating the surroundings and group atmospheres. This indirect behavioural steering through atmospheres, which promoted an active cooperation of the participants and decisions made by them proved to be much more effective and sustainable than an authoritarian, direct form of leadership. Binder argues that the knowledge of group dynamics obtained from these experiments should be used for a democratic change management: this would place action research in the service of what Binder calls 'efficient democracy'.

Literary scholars Michael Neumann and Marcus Twellmann were able to buttress their thesis that literary stories and scholarly village histories, which were paradigmatic for the emergence of historical anthropology beginning in the 1970s, are genealogically related (Neumann / Twellmann 2014). The two scholars use the concepts of ‘marginality’ and ‘speaking for others’ to analyse the social constellations from which both kinds of village stories emerged. Sylwia Werner, an internationally renowned expert on Polish microbiologist and science theorist Ludwik Fleck, reconstructed for the first time the pluralist, urban knowledge culture of Lemberg modernism during the interwar period and thereby the multi-layered genealogy of Fleck’s theories of the ‘thought style’ and ‘thought collective’ from a continuous ‘thought traffic’ between science, philosophy and art. In addition to articles (e.g. Werner 2014) and a volume edited together with Bernd Stiegler about locations and spaces – not least, cities – of knowledge in Central and Eastern Europe as ‘laboratories of modernism’ (Stiegler / Werner 2016), Werner was also able to complete a substantial book manuscript during the second funding period of EXC 16 (to be submitted as habilitation thesis). Friedrich Cain’s dissertation also focused on the cognitive environment of Polish cities, albeit during the German occupation in the Second World War. Cain’s work, which is about to be published, investigates the clandestine organizational forms of research especially in Warsaw, Kraków and Lemberg. He traces how familiar epistemological infrastructures – that is, an entire arsenal of equipment, books, techniques and virtues – were re-organized in secret, hidden in private apartments, camouflaged as official enterprises or at the threshold between the German administration and the Polish underground cluster. Like Nora Binder’s work, the dissertation was supervised by Bernhard Kleeberg, who in addition to an anthology on *Bad Habits* published by Suhrkamp Verlag (*Schlechte Angewohnheiten*, 2012), numerous articles and the co-editorship of four special focuses in journals, was able to complete a habilitation thesis at EXC 16 on the concept of the living standard in the 19th century; after working as junior professor of the History of the Humanities and Social Sciences at Konstanz, Kleeberg is currently professor of the History of Science at Erfurt.

Nora Binder’s and Friedrich Cain’s studies will be published in the series *Historische Wissensforschung (Studies in the History of Science)*, established by Bernhard Kleeberg and other colleagues closely tied to EXC 16. The renowned Mohr Siebeck Verlag in Tübingen has published the series since 2014. The series seeks to analyse the origins and stabilization, the transformation and deconstruction of knowledge in concrete practices, thereby promoting historical epistemology as well as more recent praxeological approaches in science studies and social studies of knowledge. It focuses in particular on the history of the humanities, the social sciences and human sciences and – although the current group of editors are at most former Konstanz colleagues – it represents through its founding constellation one of the most important living heritages of cluster support. Julian Bauer’s dissertation was also published here in book

form (2016). Bauer's project, supervised as well by Bernhard Kleeberg and written in the EXC-16 doctoral programme Cultures of Time, is entitled *Zellen, Wellen, Systeme* and is a genealogy of systemic thought from 1880 to 1980. This book also has points of contact with research in Konstanz on processes of 'association' around 1800 and the epistemic effects of the visual language of the 'network' in sociological theories. Contrary to the idea that systems theory first arose after the Second World War and with the boom of cybernetics, the historian Bauer is able to trace in his book not only the forgotten organismic sociology, but also the many sources of systemic ideas reaching back into the late 19th century. Two dissertations, one by literary scholar Ingrid Kleeberg (2014) and the other by sociologist Tobias Schlechtriemen (2014), were also composed in the closer surroundings of EXC 16, but only supported with cluster funding for the publication. While Ingrid Kleeberg describes the operational mode of a revolutionary imaginary and thereby traces the consequences that the concept of 'association' had beginning in 1750 for a new understanding of politically engaged literature by enabling, through the use of analogies, border traffic between mental, semiotic and political processes, Schlechtriemen employs the sociological theories of Jakob Levy Moreno, Manuel Castells and Bruno Latour to show how the image of the 'network' predetermines the objects of sociological research.

Bernhard Kleeberg and Doris Schweitzer both published genealogies of sociology, their central objects, modes of explanation and guiding concepts, albeit in quite different ways. However, the major study on Theodor Fontane's 'fearful modernism' (2014) that Gerhart von Graevenitz completed as a permanent fellow of the *Kulturwissenschaftliches Kolleg* can also be included here, as it depicts the conceptual and medial origins of the theories of a collective political and social imaginary in Fontane's intellectual surroundings that are still powerful today, not least in Konstanz. It inspired in this way important reflections on the topicality of the 19th century that extend far beyond the shared experiences of radical modernizations drives, social uncertainties and global expansion movements (cf Neumann et al 2017). Bernhard Kleeberg shows in his research how in the course of the 19th century through observation and control the 'bad habits' of the poor and the lower classes could first be formulated as social explanations of their situation, which then contributed to the constitution of sociology as a scholarly discipline with 'habits' as a key epistemological category. Doris Schweitzer was initially an active member of the research group Idioms of Social Analysis and then headed the group, before finally obtaining funding for a postdoc project in EXC 16. In the completed manuscript of her 'second book', submitted as habilitation thesis, Schweitzer investigates the constitution of the 'epistemic thing' (Hans-Jörg Rheinberger) 'society' in German private-law scholarship in the 19th and the early 20th centuries. Beginning with the German Historical School through various stations up to Durkheim, Tönnies and Weber as the established classics of sociology, Schweitzer is able to demonstrate using a genealogical approach that law could become autonomous in the 19th century precisely through

its connection to society, through the discovery of society in law and that, conversely, it was this juridical connection to society that first allowed sociology to harness the law in terms of social theory as the central guarantor of the social order and thereby develop its specifically sociological line of vision.

The essays and studies on 'the arts of governing people' (2017) that Freiburg sociologist Ulrich Bröckling revised and expanded at the *Kulturwissenschaftliches Kolleg* explore the power mechanisms at play in the currently widespread technologies of the self and of integration that aim at participation and consensus. The essays also include a genealogical perspective – for instance, regarding 'resilience' and 'meditation' – that is indispensable for understanding contemporary society. Matters are similar with Leon Wansleben's sociological investigation of expert cultures of analysts in contemporary currency markets (2013), which remains highly topical even today in the face of economic distortions in the aftermath of the most recent financial crisis. The book was based on Wansleben's dissertation in the doctoral programme Cultures of Time and draws one of its central points from the historical derivation of its object. For only when the historical course of current currency market practices – characterized by ruptures and continuities – is taken into account can the familiar interpretation made famous as the 'performativity thesis' (Michel Callon) be replaced with a more complicated, but more reasonable description. The performativity thesis states that scientific models of financial economics in essence produce the very market events they analyse and allocate corresponding roles to the actors involved. Wansleben's own interpretation, based on historical depictions, interviews and participatory observations, emphasizes the role of the knowledge produced by analysts in the historically developed structures and cultures, traces their languages and the interactive forms that have developed over long periods of times and investigates the current practices from which the expert status of analysts and their market visions emerge and allow them to claim authority for themselves.

The cluster did not treat issues of epistemology, methodology and the history of knowledge as merely parallel actions (thereby outsourcing them). Given the cluster's overall fundamental orientation, these issues belonged to the core research it supported. Exemplary in this regard was also the work of Wolfgang Seibel and Jurij Murašov and their research associates. Seibel summarized important conceptual sources of inspiration for his own research on public administration (see *Autocracies, Violence and Administration* above) in his book *Verwaltung verstehen* (2016), which was published by Suhrkamp Verlag as an introduction to the history of theories of public administration, and also pursued his own epistemological interests in the narrower sense in his research on 'organizational hybridity' (Seibel 2015). Seibel's theoretical argument, which emerged from various debates within EXC 16, is that we can better understand the nature of organizational hybridity if we focus on the mix of coordinating mechanisms, rather

than on sector-specific formal types such as non-profit organizations, public enterprises or private organizations assuming public tasks. It is not, he argues, the manifest forms of hybridity, but rather the latent ones that require a much more fine-grained empirical analysis than the mere classification of hybrid organizations according to legal criteria. In organizational reality, the stability and effectiveness of hybrid organizations is crucially dependent on the leadership adequately understanding them and, to that extent, also on pragmatism in the sense of balancing the formal requirements of legitimization with the substantial necessities of problem solving.

In Slavic studies, Jurij Murašov focused on mediological analyses of Yugoslavian literary and cultural production from the 1960s to the 1980s. Murašov's work began with the observation that oral traditions continued to have a significant effect on Yugoslavian literature and art, on film and philosophy. As a result, specific poetological structures formed that are difficult to grasp with the traditional philological instruments and genre categories. Using individual examples from literature, film and the philosophy of practice, he was able to demonstrate how poetics is constituted from increased attempts to recapture physical-oral linguistic experiences both in and against the medium of writing. Beginning in the 1960s, this resulted in the growing cultural relevance of the literary-artistic realm, in which cohesive and conflictual energies for regional-language identity formations (Serbian, Croatian, Bosnian) built up that also contained the potential to question the entire Yugoslavian political system. This was followed by research on the connection between linguistic and literary debates, on the one hand, and the increasing spread of television beginning in the 1970s to all regions of Yugoslavia, on the other. As Murašov was able to show with various material, the spread of the medium of television directly correlated with the politicization of regional-language cultures and the related ethno-national and religious dispositions. This mediological connection, worked out by Murašov together with Davor Beganović and Katrin Winkler, opened a new perspective on the political decay process of socialist Yugoslavia, but at the same time also went beyond the Yugoslavian example and aimed at the profound systemic and cultural effects of television and the relationship between technological media and ideological-political formations and mental dispositions (Murašov 2012). They found that the essentially utopian-oriented socialism – which can be mass communicated in the linguistic world of the book, but also of broadcasting and be recursively affirmed in the mass media as a specific, word-based, imaginary form of knowledge – can no longer be adequately communicated in the medium of television because here language and image are reassembled synaesthetically and language is embedded and individualized in physical gestures. This thesis was demonstrated on examples of late Soviet culture (Murašov, 2016).

The close intertwining of fundamental reflections in our research work is also evident in the official designations of the professorships established within the scope of the cluster, whereby the



newly established anthropology division stands for a discipline whose self-understanding is characterized by a continual calling into question and re-orientation of its own modes of representation and theorising. As described above, the history of knowledge at Konstanz concentrates programmatically on the history of institutions, concepts and knowledge practices of the humanities and social sciences. In addition to Albrecht Koschorke and his tenets for a general narrative theory, the members of a Culturalization Group at the *Kulturwissenschaftliches Kolleg* (cf Kleeberg / Langenohl 2011) and Jurij Murašov in his updated mediological literary studies, as well as Kirsten Mahlke, professor of Cultural Theory and Methodology, and her research associates all engaged in reflections on cultural theory in the narrower sense. Apart from Mahlke's own contributions to the post-dictatorial Argentinian imaginary discussed above, such reflection was also evident in the first German anthology of Latin American cultural theory (2015), comprehensively introduced, commentated and edited by Isabel Exner and Gudrun Rath. These theoretical commitments deserve much more attention than they have received to date in German-language debates. We should also mention contributions to cultural theory that were published during the first funding period by Suhrkamp Verlag: a two-volume edition of Jurij Lotman's writings (*Die Innenwelt des Denkens*, 2010; *Kultur und Explosion*, 2010), an edition of Mikhail Bakhtin's study *Chronotopos* (2008), as well as *Die Figur des Dritten. Ein kulturwissenschaftliches Paradigma* (2010), an anthology that arose from the research training group of the same name and whose completion was also supported with cluster funds.

During the transition to the second funding period, several principal cluster members and cooperation partners focused on the cultural studies paradigm of similarity (Bhatti / Kimmich 2015 and 2018 in English translation). Crucial for this was the diagnosis that the concept of identity had already been broadly criticized in the postcolonial theory developed over recent decades. The form of cultural studies that emerged from the crisis facing a Western universalism shaped during Europe's colonial period has sought to question traditional hierarchies by shifting focus away from majority societies to the minorities within them and by placing a correspondingly higher valuation on marginal and subordinate actors. The concept of difference was central to this reorientation. Ironically, however, this postcolonial reweighing of difference and alterity itself remained attached to colonial conceptual forms: in order to recognize other groups and persons in their irreducible 'otherness', they had to first be defined as fundamentally different to a certain degree. In this way, the acceptance and understanding sought by the discourse of the other continues to be based on the tacit premise of a prior othering – boundaries are thus confirmed precisely where the self-declared goal is to overcome them. In addition, anti-hegemonial gestures only retain their force to the extent they are engaged with strongly identifiable hegemons. If previously compact majorities disintegrate into a confusion of disparate factions, such operations of semantic change lose energy. In the discussions between members of the centre and

cooperative partners, 'similarity' emerged as a half-forgotten conceptual category well suited for exploring this diversifying process. The rediscovery of this category was prompted by suggestions from Anil Bhatti (New Delhi) and reflects an unease at the colonial implications still adhering to postcolonial theory like a conceptual memory-trace. By contrast, the concept of 'similarity' is meant as an approach to a 'post-postcolonial' and cosmopolitan research field: one in which a fluctuating interplay of partial correspondences and partial deviations can be sounded, and that for its part is sufficiently plastic to make the ways of life and semantic praxis of various societies understandable without strict and clear-cut demarcations. Through changing perspectives of similarity and difference, it is possible to take account of the overlappings and gradations in concrete cultural contexts, and to do so in a flexible and differentiated way. In contrast to the category of identity, which presumes a strict test of consistency and corresponding rules of affiliation, similarity is suited to a theoretically-reflected hermeneutics of the provisional. It hovers, as it were, without a precise locus, in a transitional zone between the self and the other. In its semantic constitution, similarity thus posits blurred contours in place of sharp and opposing borders.

## **2.3 Research perspectives**

### *Endings*

The last major conference co-financed by EXC 16 took place from 29 September to 2 October 2019. It was the Conference of the German Anthropological Association (GAA) on the subject 'The End of Negotiations?', organized by the GAA and the anthropology division in Konstanz. If EXC-16 research was still explicitly shaped by an understanding of culture as a 'medium of social negotiations', which presumes – as has also been illustrated in this report through several projects – that even the conditions required for social structuring are the objects of cultural negotiations, the German Anthropological Association subjected this basic conviction to a critical revision. And it was encouraged to do so by the anthropology division – founded in Konstanz within the scope of cluster – which immediately combined the official closure of its institutional establishment with a discursive opening significant for the future of cultural studies in Konstanz. The concept paper on the conference composed in this context leaves no doubt that the talk of negotiations that had been used until now often remained too vague and has increasingly been unable to do justice to current global upheavals. The belief that worldwide exchanges could contribute to the emergence of a 'global ecumene' is, the Konstanz authors noted, gradually ceding to an awareness that existing or newly emerging forms of inequality, exclusion, isolationism and fortification contribute to new forms of social boundary-making. This also pertains to questions concerning with whom and under what conditions, in which ways and with which goals social actors negotiate with others, if at all. However, processes of polarization and

ideological closure in the relations between different social groupings are also becoming more virulent within nation states. Taking recourse to different registers of social and cultural distinctions, disjointed and introverted spaces of social negotiation are emerging – such as in the fragmented publics of social media – that hardly take notice of each other, or that make any type of dialogue dependent on abiding by one's own terms. The conference relied on the double semantics of its title by asking about, on the one hand, what is perceived as 'non-negotiable' by social actors in certain situations and contexts, whether for strategic reasons, ideological convictions or life-preserving necessities. On the other hand, it also sought to explore those practices that bring the potentially endless dynamics of social negotiations to a closure – even if this is only provisional and might later be revised and thus called into question. This includes, for example, provisional agreements as a platform for the possibility of future interactions, powerful acts of institutionalization and legal closure, but also the radical withdrawal of a willingness to negotiate.

The last workshop that was held at our Institute for Advanced Study, the *Kulturwissenschaftliches Kolleg*, with support from EXC 16 raised a question already in July 2019 that complemented – and not coincidentally – the aforementioned anthropological conference: What is a good ending? Conceived and organized by Eva Eßlinger (Munich), an alumna of our institute, and Eva von Contzen (Freiburg), the workshop concentrated on the diversity of endings in epic, dramatic and musical genres. In their concept paper, the two literary scholars noted:

To all appearances, the part of a work that decides, as it were, retroactively whether it is perceived and appreciated as a poetic work, that is, as a creation determined essentially by its form, is one of the elements that eludes determination in the sense of a general poetics. Already in Aristotle's famous definition, the narrative ending is initially defined only negatively: as the last of three parts, "after which nothing else follows".

The participants presenting and discussing in the seminar room of the institute addressed in detail closed and open endings, round and sudden endings, violent and happy endings, and finally attempts to postpone the ending and let it continue, as it were, as a series. Seen in this light, the genre of the final report of an externally-funded research institution is also subject to narrative conventions, if not laws. The regulations of the Excellence Initiative reduce the impact of the ending to the extent that they place value on the sustainability of cluster structures in concentrated form. And our structures, presented in section 4.3 'Sustainability', should prevent discussion threads that developed over longer time periods from breaking off and at the same

time establish new contexts for research and discussion. To conclude this section, we would like to present four such contexts and how they arose.

### *Practicing plausibility*

In the current transition phase of EXC 16 to the Cultural Studies Research Centre (*Zentrum für Kulturwissenschaftliche Forschung*, ZKF), a group has formed on the initiative of Thomas Kirsch that would like to adopt the productive format of guiding topics that had been used at our Institute for Advanced Study and to focus on the topic 'plausibility' in regular seminars, reading sessions and a workshop with international visiting scholars. In addition to the inspiration that this interdisciplinary group can draw from discussions of the conceptual category of 'similarity' and the hermeneutics of the provisional that it enables, it can also connect to results of the guiding topic Non-Knowledge (Twellmann 2014, Dilley / Kirsch 2015) as well as the research programme of a praxeology of truth that allows for studying the dynamics and variability of truth in the sense of a situated doing truth, as formulated by Bernhard Kleeberg and Robert Suter within EXC 16 (Kleeberg / Suter 2014). The group intends to gain conceptual focus from the diagnosis that we are currently witnessing an escalating inflation of competing and mutually irreconcilable truth claims. This process involves people professing knowledge about '(alternative) facts', some of whom are even willing to press home their truth claims through hate crimes, while others criticize the arbitrariness of what they call a 'post-factual world' and attempt to engage in nuanced debates based on reasoned arguments. The group suggests that a productive way to deal scientifically with the important questions raised by contemporary and historical controversies about truth, while simultaneously maintaining a critical distance from them, is to make 'plausibility' an object of empirical investigation and theoretical reflection.

Compared to the exclusive rigidity often sought for in discourses and practices of truth, plausibility is a much more elastic notion that occupies in everyday life the conceptual space between what is perceived to be factual and evidently given, on the one hand, and the incredible and counterintuitive, on the other. Representing neither established truth nor the unconceivable, plausibility stands for an evaluation of claims about the world which are assigned the ambiguous status of 'well-founded possibilities'. While expressing what is considered credible in the light of previous experiences and the given state of (uncertain) knowledge (Dilley / Kirsch 2015), the invocation of plausibility is open to reconfigurations in its line of reasoning and largely indifferent towards alternative claims. As such, plausibility is characterized by a great degree of flexibility and, most importantly, is always contextual, provisionally located in 'a space of possibles' (Geoffrey Hawthorn) and thus constantly in abeyance. The project group intends to probe the heuristic potential of the notion of plausibility from an interdisciplinary perspective. Drawing on theoretical approaches from anthropology, history, literary studies, philosophy, sociology and art

history, the members explore the varied sociocultural articulations of plausibility in different regions of the world and different historical epochs. Their questions include: How are plausibilities construed in a given sociocultural context? What resources are used in the 'politics of plausibility' (Alan Sinfield) to make one's (representational) practices plausible, such as rhetoric persuasion, evidence-based forms of argument, appeals to tradition, or authorization by institutions? To what degree does plausibility rely on peoples' common-sense assumptions and forms of tacit/practical knowledge? By which processes are people socialized into culture- and context-specific logics of plausibility?

### *Research Institute Social Cohesion*

Under the speakership of Daniel Thym, a group formed within EXC 16 that is currently establishing, together with colleagues from ten other universities and research institutes, a nationwide Research Institute Social Cohesion, which will take up its regular work in the course of 2020, presuming a positive evaluation of the overall proposal. In its preparatory discussions, the successful applicants were able to formulate a joint concept that took up numerous findings of EXC 16 and will at the same time add new perspectives to cultural studies research on integration in Konstanz. Media scholar Isabell Otto also brings to the project approaches and results from the research group Media and Participation. Between demand and entitlement (speaker: Beate Ochsner), which closely cooperated with our Institute for Advanced Study. The guiding topic The Public Sphere and Representation (2017/18), supervised and initiated by Michael Neumann and Svenia Schneider-Wulf at the institute, was also an important inspiration. Philip Manow's widely debated investigation *Die Politische Ökonomie des Populismus* (2018), for example, arose in this context. In this study, Manow supplements a comparative analysis of European political economies and welfare-state regimes with 'cultural elements', for instance, how the memory of past experiences of social decline and their consequences affect political attitudes.

According to the Konstanz group, there are four aspects to the topic of social cohesion. Social cohesion should be 1) investigated at the level of socio-economic factors; has 2) a cognitive-affective dimension; is 3) influenced by political mythmaking and other forms of collectively effective narration; and is 4) dependent on many unnoticed structural conditions spanning from piecemeal administrative regulations to technical-data standardizations. The structural participation encompasses education, training and labour, the protective and care systems of the constitutional and welfare state, but also social and political participation in the wider sense. In its cognitive-affective dimension, social cohesion turns out to be a collectively shared feeling of togetherness and familiarity, the readiness to solidary behaviour and the expectation of such behaviour from others. For this cognitive-affective side of social cohesion, not only immediate subjective experience, but also the respectively hegemonic discursive situation plays an

important role. Whether humans encounter a polity with trust or are uncertain due to fears of disintegration depends not only on objective factors. This is also influenced to a great extent by descriptions and interpretations of the situation in the media, which every society continuously produces and which can accordingly be politically manipulated. Especially powerful here is the third aspect, political mythmaking, for instance, through the construction of collective identities, which can promote social cohesion on the basis of their group references, but can also increase tensions and produce divisions. Fourth, finally, are structural conditions that are important for building social cohesion, but usually function unnoticed in the background and thus are rarely the subject of public debates – except in cases of malfunctions and blatant failures. These encompass the functionality of existing institutions, including the administrative-juridical regulatory density produced by them, public infrastructure and logistics, communicative-technical forms and increasingly also algorithmic forms of societal steering.

These four dimensions of social cohesion overlap, but also frequently come into conflict with each other. Thus, the relationship between socio-economic factors (1) and mood changes in the population (2), which can harden into political polarizations, cannot be deciphered causally in a simple way; there is no dependable prognostic correlation here. Similarly, the subjective perception of one's own situation (2) and the assessment of overall social development (3) can deviate significantly, as the most recent Bertelsmann Study (2017) on social cohesion in Germany demonstrates. According to this study, the majority of those questioned evaluated the individual situation of their own social environment as largely positive; this experience, however, stands in stark contrast to the pessimistic view of general social tendencies – or of 'what is reflected of them in public debates'. The widely disseminated image of a society drifting apart (3) is, in turn, reinforced by an idealization of the past frequently accompanying it, which moreover does not sufficiently take into account the fact that functional interrelatedness and social interdependence (4) in the process of modernity have reached an historically unparalleled level.

The concrete projects of the Konstanz group, which will be located institutionally within the Cultural Studies Research Centre, will produce in particular cultural-studies accentuated contributions to the focus Theories, Politics and Cultures of Cohesion developed together with other locations. They will also strive for a close connection between scholarly research and transfer orientation. The group intends to initiate interactive processes at the communal level with a participatory narrative project that will establish an archive for narratives of communal solidarity – as this was effective in the scope of the 'refugee crisis' in 2015 – as well as a further education programme for integration officers. Four concentrations are planned in the realm of research: the thematic field called 'Migration and Integration' will emphasize legal questions, from the definition of affiliation to the significance of the constitution for discourses of societal self-understanding. The group will also examine

'narratives' in the sense of collectively powerful stories – based on the presumption, confirmed by EXC-16 research, that the positioning of individuals and groups in society is influenced not only by socio-economic processes, but equally by narrative self-descriptions. Praxeological and European comparative research projects will participate in the institution-wide investigation of the phenomenon of inclusion and exclusion within the framework of gainful employment. Finally, under the title 'The Public Sphere and Representation', the group will examine the political and social consequences for social cohesion that result from changing media infrastructures and global transformation experiences. As an overarching contribution, the Konstanz group has also conceived a collective publication on key concepts of social cohesion. This publication will present the four aforementioned dimensions of cohesion in a scholarly rigorous, yet generally accessible form and is intended for dissemination through various media channels.

### *Post-Eurocentric Europe*

A proposal for a new research training group Post-Eurocentric Europe (designated speaker: Albrecht Koschorke) has already been submitted. This doctoral programme aims to interrogate the cultural role of Europe in a world no longer dominated by a hegemonic, Eurocentric gaze. While the continent lost its claim to global dominance during the twentieth century, many of the leading ideas in the European tradition have only partially been historicized and 'provincialized' in the wake of the post-colonial turn. Doing so will be a principle goal of the programme, which will critically re-evaluate the premises of the established discourse on Europe. At the same time, however, the process of re-evaluation will serve as a springboard for assessing the productive potential of Europe in today's world: What future roles can Europe's cultural resources, social models and institutions play in a new, multi-polar world order? The group will pursue a fourfold line of inquiry. This encompasses the following aspects: (1) an approach based on literary studies with (2) diachronic contextualization (3) connected to a global perspective that is (4) rounded out by social and legal expertise and knowledge. The research that will be pursued in this framework ought, therefore, to proceed from an analysis of political as well as aesthetic concepts, imaginaries and collective narratives that are or have been constitutive of varied images of Europe and its place in the world. In this context, projects dealing with entangled history will be particularly relevant in order to rewrite conventional narratives of self/other that rely on a European perspective, for instance in the grand categories of modernity, secularization, or globalization. Because scholarship has tended traditionally to overlook the construction of early colonial as well as alternative cultural hegemonies of the pre-modern age, the doctoral programme will aim to include these topics in its research agenda. Particular attention will be paid to perspectives from outside of the geographical centre of Europe: Cooperations are planned with partners, inter alia, in South Africa, North and South America, Russia, and the Arabian region. These aspire to create a broad dialogic space for new conceptualizations of Europe in the 21st century.

The proposed research training group benefits not only from the rich experience that the University of Konstanz has gathered from previous programmes of the same kind, but also from the long-running structures and networks of international exchange and contact developed in the context of EXC 16, the related master's programme Studies in European Culture and the EXC-16 doctoral programme Europe in the Globalized World, whose results will be incorporated into the new programme.

The EXC-16 doctoral programme inquired into Europe's complex roles, self-images and constructions of alterity in a globalized world. Its focus was on twenty-first century global upheavals in an increasingly interconnected and multipolar world. Global shifts of power have meant that Europe's position in the world is under discussion in fundamental ways, a diagnosis that will form the basis of the new programme (presuming a positive evaluation of the proposal). Research of the EXC-16 programme, however, concentrated less on the cultural role of the continent and the Europe discourse than on questions of cooperation and conflict, socio-cultural identification and exclusion as well as rule and legitimation. What processes are at play in Europe's self-constitution through relationships and interconnections with those beyond its borders? A number of thematic, theoretical and methodological junctures emerged in the programme. Some members explored problems of (culturally coded) processes of social differentiation and their evaluation. Their focus was on the processes of self-ascriptions and ascriptions of others, rather than reproducing primordialist approaches to ethnicity and identity in the analysis. At the same time, key concepts emerging from research on ethnicity offered a starting point for examining social differentiation along various dimensions, including gender, race, origin and class. In her historical work on the 'German' minority in South Africa, for example, Sarah Schwab examines how it crystallized into a (real or imagined) community, demarcated itself from other groups, and acted as a social collective. Her dissertation, which Sven Reichardt is supervising, has almost been completed. Also adopting an historical perspective, Ole Münch inquired into how variously positioned social actors formed groups and drew social boundaries at the rag fairs of Victorian London. He also analysed how contemporaries depicted those involved in social and political terms and how they have been viewed by historical researchers. Münch's dissertation, which Sven Reichardt also supervised, was submitted in summer semester 2019.

Members of the programme also investigated regimes of sovereignty. The principle of the equality of sovereign states – that is, a state's unlimited freedom to exercise sovereign authority within its own borders – developed in European legal space. When former colonies achieved independence, the newly emerging states adopted this principle, which is accompanied by another: that of territorial integrity, which means a state's freedom from interference from other



states in exercising its sovereign authority. With the growing interdependence of state structures, this concept of international law has been increasingly called into question. In many areas, we can identify new dependencies emerging from the traditional perspective with its strict focus on inter-state relations. This has led to a relativization or problematization of state sovereignty. Beyond this, the influence of non-national institutions on a state's domestic legislation has an impact on its citizens. This is the case, for instance, with countries that trade with the European Union and thus declare EU guidelines to be nationally applicable law. Here a portion of state sovereignty is no longer determined by the state itself, but rather from outside. The questions of shared, overlapping, and competing sovereignties emerging from these empirical constellations played an important role in two completed projects of the doctoral programme. In her dissertation supervised by Hans Christian Röhl, legal scholar Katharina Meyer analysed the problem of sovereignty as exemplified in the international trade in food. She examined the ways in which European Commission officials execute controls in third countries for the sake of maintaining EU standards (Meyer 2018). Wolfgang Egner's dissertation in the field of history, also with an interdisciplinary orientation, explored the intellectual foundations and historical specificity of the protectorate as a form of rule. Protectorates are understood here as formations in which the sovereignty of the original ruler is formally maintained, but is accompanied by the development of parallel structures of rule (Egner 2018).

Estela Schindel also investigated the question of competing and conflicting sovereignty in her research project on the discourses and practices of Frontex (the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union). As a supra-national organization, the EU is a partner of both member states and third countries and plays a role in monitoring and deterrence manoeuvres in the border areas. Schindel's study highlights, in particular, the material practices of border surveillance and control, the technological equipment and the definition of borders, of Europe and of the people who cross these borders (cf Schindel 2016). The sociologist Schindel coordinated the programme together with anthropologist Tilmann Heil, who while at EXC 16 researched a second book project with the working title 'Valued difference: Recently arrived in Rio de Janeiro'. Heil is currently continuing work on the book at Katholieke Universiteit Leuven. This project, which the cluster supported with funding for numerous months of fieldwork, explores how new migrants in an emergent city of the South, Rio de Janeiro, compare, reflect and embody distinct social mobilities in(to) a locality characterized by multiple contradicting and interdependent systems of stratification. Heil's aim is to understand highly stratified urban spaces from multiple perspectives in order to contribute to a fuller picture of the overall dynamics of current urbanities and the processes of socio-cultural diversification in the Global South.

The global incorporation and significance of Europe also currently play an important role in the Balzan Prize Research Group on the topic 'Reconstructing Memory in the City – Transnational and Local (European) Sites of Memory', which is headed by Aleida and Jan Assmann. The group has been working in the Bischofsvilla, the building that housed the *Kulturwissenschaftliches Kolleg*, and has also made urban space its primary object of investigation (in addition to research by Heil, cf especially Lenger 2013, Langenohl 2015). European memory is often conceived as a supra-national memory shaped and imposed in a top-down process. The focus of the Balzan project, however, is on the dynamics of collective memory as it is formed by initiatives and movements from below. Emphasis is being placed on the responses of (European) cities and local actors to new social, political and cultural challenges in their constructed surroundings. A basic tenet of the project is that in times of radical change towns and cities are a crucial context for the negotiation of the past.

### *Traveling forms*

In the course of the second funding period of EXC 16, a larger group around literary scholars Juliane Vogel, Christina Wald and Marcus Twellmann as well as anthropologist Thomas Kirsch became interested in the global mobility of forms. In addition to their own research on tragedy (Vogel 2018, Wald 2019), the village story (Twellmann 2019a) and the anthropology of activism (for which a project has already been established by Thomas Kirsch and Judith Beyer), joint reflections on concepts of 'form' and 'mobility' in art history, sociology and legal studies in particular also played a role here. Moreover, Marcus Twellmann recently pleaded for a new formalism in a programmatic article (Twellmann 2019b), which adds 'assemblage' to a historical typology of form concepts and highlights possibilities of theory-guided research on globally traveling forms. The results from the work of the research group Genre and Globalization by Miriam Lay Brander (2017), funded by EXC 16 together with the Baden-Württemberg Foundation, have demonstrated that literary genres should not be understood as fixed forms that circulate globally, but rather as often transitory stabilizations that emerge in certain cultural and medial constellations (and can also disappear again).

The research group Traveling Forms (designated speaker: Juliane Vogel) has already developed a proposal that includes three subprojects: Traveling Tragedy (Vogel, Wald), Activism as a Traveling Aesthetic Form (Kirsch) and Forms in Translation (Twellmann). The group members are united by their intention of describing traveling forms in theoretically precise terms and on the basis of concrete analyses. Wherever and whenever humans socialize, they create and use forms. As humans make sense of the world, interact with each other, or engage in acts of symbolization, they take recourse to existing forms or invent new ones. And in doing so, they adjust forms to the situation at hand and often cause them to travel through time and space. In the

present era of globalization, this mobility of forms has been heightened, posing a challenge to our understanding of form that we can no longer overlook. In order to account for cross-cultural formal entanglements and interpenetrations, we must therefore reconceptualize traditional notions of form. The project responds to this challenge from present-day and historical perspectives by focusing on forms that move across cultural and social boundaries. The group members want to investigate how forms structure reality and provide collective orientation in rapidly changing contexts, as well as moments where they fail to do so. In particular, they are interested in how aesthetic forms travel and indeed are recreated in the course of transmission. In moving through time and space, these forms also 'move' in an aesthetic sense: they arouse and channel emotions and thus stimulate social interaction in a unique way. In investigating how forms change by traveling, and how they sometimes emerge only in the course of traveling, the project will foster intensive dialogue between scholars from different disciplines. As their core discipline, the members have chosen literary studies, which has a rich tradition of discussions about form. In the first phase, they will begin by expanding on the dialogue between literary studies and cultural anthropology that has a long tradition at the University of Konstanz. This dialogue reaches back to the Collaborative Research Centre Literature and Anthropology established at the University in 1996. In a dialogue of these two disciplines, the group hopes to combine an aesthetic perspective with an anthropological view that encompasses social and cultural factors. In a second phase, the members will seek to include art history and sociology in their discussion.

The group does not conceive forms as fixed eidetic entities, but as interconnected structures of changing elements that take shape only through processes of temporal and spatial transmission. On the one hand, the members are interested in the processes that integrate or re-functionalize traveling forms in new contexts. The questions here are: how have particular aesthetic forms traveled to new contexts, how have they been changed by these new contexts, and how have they in turn shaped the contexts in which they arrived? On the other hand, they aim to describe precisely the tensions between how forms change and how they are recognized. Regarding recognizability, specific questions they will ask include: when and how do forms integrating new elements remain recognizable? Who takes measures to ensure that forms can be recognized and what are these measures? At the same time, they also want to know: when does socio-cultural change lead to new forms marked by new names? In these investigations, they will pay special attention to the following overarching questions: when do forms stabilize despite socio-spatial transmission, and when do they stabilize by means of transmission? The overall aim is to gain theoretical insights by concretely engaging with the material conditions that enable or inhibit the traveling of forms. Instead of theorizing on the basis of other theories of form and mobility alone, the group wants to develop a mode of theorizing that oscillates between analysis and abstraction.

## 3 People

### 3.1 Impact of the Cluster on academic positions

As outlined in the two proposals, the University of Konstanz established within the scope of EXC 16 a total of five new permanent professorships in the participating departments. Three full professorships (W3) with the official designations 'History of Religions', 'Social and Cultural Anthropology' and 'Cultural Theory and Methodology' as well as one junior professorship (W1) in the History of the Humanities and Social Sciences were filled during the first funding period. The junior professorship was continued with a new appointment in the second period to a full professorship (W3) with the official designation 'History of Knowledge of the Humanities and the Social Sciences'. The four initial appointments were made using a new procedure for the University of Konstanz. The rector assumed a special responsibility in recruiting these appointments and was chair of a so-called 'head committee', for which the four respective appointments committees did the groundwork. In this way it was possible to make concerted decisions and to consistently pursue important strategic goals – for example, equal opportunity concerns – simultaneously for all of the appointments. At the end of this process, positions were offered to three female candidates and one male candidate (the junior professorship to the male candidate).

In 2010, that is, toward the end of the first funding period, the university established another junior professorship (W1) for Cultures of Economy in the Department of Politics and Public Administration, initially with its own funds in order to strengthen this research field within the cluster. This professorship was included in the renewal proposal for the second funding period. If the person appointed to this junior professorship received a positive evaluation, they were to be hired permanently for a full professorship (W3). This tenure option – which is vital for the attractiveness of such a position and the career perspectives tied to it – did not exist when the initial junior professorship (W1) for the History of the Humanities and Social Sciences had been established. Since the legal possibilities for this were now available during preparations for the renewal proposal, the cluster also decided to provide the initial financing for four further junior professorships (W1) with tenure options. These positions were included in the proposal. Their continuation or perpetuation was supposed to be secured through a replacement model for existing full professorships (W3). The official designations of these positions were determined in coordination with the Rectorate and the participating departments, and junior professorships with tenure options were established in Global Economic History, Romance Literature with a special focus on Iberoamerican Literature and Domestic Politics and Public Administration. The plan to appoint a junior professor in Practical Philosophy with a special focus on Political and Social

Philosophy in a similar manner could not be realized initially. It has recently been taken up again by the Department of Philosophy, which is currently attempting to implement the position.

In the case of the professorship in Cultures of Economy, the Rectorate, the participating departments and the cluster committees agreed to make a significant change for strategic reasons. When the first person appointed to this professorship accepted a position at another university, it became possible to fill a grievous void in the field of anthropology. For all the professorships established by the cluster, we tried to ensure that they set new thematic or methodological accents, while at the same time fitting well with the existing departmental structure at Konstanz. Anthropology was something of an exception in this regard. It has not been established as an independent department, but as a joint field with sociology in the Department of History, Sociology, Sport Science and Empirical Educational Research, and initially had only one professorship. The appeal of anthropology was hampered by the limited number of faculty, not least because it was not possible to obtain a habilitation (postdoctoral qualification) in this field at Konstanz. To remedy this shortcoming, the university established within the frame of the cluster a junior professorship with tenure option in Social and Political Anthropology and did not appoint a replacement for the vacant professorship in Cultures of Economy. Introducing anthropology into the Konstanz canon of academic disciplines was one of the most important academic and structural accomplishments of the cluster years. This was rounded out with the regular appointment of a guest professorship from the beginning of the second funding period until the end of regular excellence support. This guest professorship had initially been planned to have changing focuses and appointments, but the department and the executive board of the cluster subsequently agreed that, for the sake of curricular integration, it would be better if this position had continuity in personnel (tied to international recruitment).

None of the regular professorships established or initially appointed within the scope of the cluster is structurally limited. All of the current female junior professors have an option to become permanent appointees. Furthermore, for the most part the professorships presently include funding for other positions, so that, in addition to the professors, the departments have the option to provide budgeted positions for doctoral researchers and postdocs in the future. All of the positions will be made permanent via intra-university replacements and rededications or through funding from the State of Baden-Württemberg. The university and the cluster have implemented all of the plans outlined in the two proposals, except for the aforementioned modifications and several other minor alterations, for example, in the exact wording of the official designations of the professorships.

In the initial sentences of the first cluster proposal composed in German in 2006, the personnel situation for cultural studies at Konstanz at the time was described as follows:

For several years now a generational change has been taking place in the fields and the departments of the humanities and the social sciences at the University of Konstanz. The existing externally-funded networks and research units have contributed significantly to the fact that in new appointments for professorships, attention was already paid in the recent past to the candidates' interest in cultural studies and their interdisciplinary compatibility.

From its inception, the Konstanz cluster was never designed as a closed institution, but always understood itself as a well-equipped network committed to the principle of subsidiarity. For this reason, it supported the participating departments, especially in the regular recruitment and development of personnel. In recent years, there have been numerous appointments for professorships that are relevant to cultural studies and also important for the other disciplines. With the support of EXC 16, the university and the departments were also able to successfully counter numerous external offers, whereby not only concrete bonuses such as leave-of-absence options and initial funding for new research projects were factors, but also the open, collegial, and productive work atmosphere in Konstanz, which the cluster helped to shape in a sustained way. Of the first generation of people appointed to cluster professorships, three female professors later accepted offers from other universities, which we regretted in each case. However, this also underscores the quality of the personnel decisions made by the university and the cluster.

All of the professorships established on a permanent basis were advertised internationally. During the process, committee members actively recruited applicants, especially female candidates. The sole temporary professorship established by the university and cluster was an exception in this regard (apart from the guest professorship in anthropology). The advertisement for this associate professorship (W2) for Modern German Literature with a special focus on European Contexts was intended to provide the person appointed to the junior professorship (W1) (without a tenure option) an opportunity to prove themselves again in a competitive process, as was made clear in the advertised job description. This professorship, which was filled between 2014 and 2016, reinforced the cluster's active and intensive European focus in research, teaching and coordination. It also served as a successful career bridge: the appointed professor quickly received two job offers from other universities. As a rule, the so-called 'supplemental professorships' established multiple times by the cluster (appointed as non-tariff employment analogous to substitutes) had the same function. The full teaching load of these positions was at

times proportionally reduced for several cluster members who were especially active in research and committee work. Care was taken, however, that the sum of course offerings was always increased. The modalities of these appointments were determined by the participating departments. Both forms demonstrated the cluster's aspiration, expressly supported by the university, to maintain and develop diverse offering for professorships and transitional positions, posts und leaves of absence, as well as fellowships and scholarships, while also taking into consideration the curricula of the participating departments and the concerns of students involved.

A variety of employment and funding options requires a complementary variety of recruiting forms. Twice a year on fixed dates (30 April and 30 September), professors and the academic staff of the departments participating in the cluster were able to apply for one or two semester research fellowships at the *Kulturwissenschaftliches Kolleg*, the Institute for Advanced Study, which had been established by the cluster. This same group of people could also submit set-up project proposals, whereby postdocs were free to obtain funding for their own position. Furthermore, on these dates, all members of the participating departments were invited to propose external fellows for the Institute for Advanced Study. All of these requests, self-applications and proposals were evaluated twice and discussed at sessions of the plenary assembly. The plenary assembly then issued invitations to the institute on the basis of a bundled proposal submitted by a preceding 'small committee', which was responsible for putting together cohesive groups of fellows for the academic year. Two one-year fellowships for early career researchers at the *Kulturwissenschaftliches Kolleg* were regularly advertised internationally. The plenary assembly decided about the invitations in a procedure analogous to that for self-applications and proposals in Konstanz. The two doctoral programmes Cultures of Time and Europe in the Globalized World, the leaders of the junior research groups, as well as numerous positions for academic coordination were also advertised internationally. For these positions, smaller committees were established whose decisions were then ratified by the plenary assembly and, in the case of the academic coordinators, by the executive board. The executive board was also responsible for the allocation of equal opportunity scholarships, which are described in more detail in section 3.3 below. The leaders of junior research groups, who had already been recruited at this time, made decisions about the internationally advertised doctoral positions in the groups. They were supported by smaller committees that especially took into consideration, as in all procedures, the criterion of equal opportunity.

During the first funding period, the university and the cluster had to invent the complex structure of a previously unknown entity. This meant that the overall scope of action was enormous, giving rise to numerous possibilities, but also to risks. With the beginning of the second period, there

was time to experiment with new models, especially in recruiting personnel. The routines that were developed, for example, regarding the procedures of cluster committees and the implementation of decisions, allowed for new freedoms. Supported by the university and its administration, the cluster understood itself not only as a scholarly laboratory, but also as a procedural laboratory, in which new and unusual concepts could be tested. The selections of applicants to the doctoral programmes (doctoral candidates and coordinators) and of the leaders of the junior research groups were conducted semi-anonymously. The applications were divided into two rubrics submitted separately: the academic proposals and, in the case of the junior research groups, also structural proposals, but without CVs identifying applicants by name. Initially, the evaluation process concentrated solely on the proposals. Only immediately before the actual interviews had taken place were personal backgrounds and previous accomplishments included. In this way, the selection process was supposed to be more focused on the originality and quality of the proposals. In addition, it was hoped that this would lead to more external applications and more diverse applicants, for instance, in terms of age and nationality.

The overall results were sobering. References to this new procedure in the job listings did lead to a moderate increase in the diversity of applicants, especially in terms of the age of the candidates. However, the usual considerations about the originality of the proposal and the previous accomplishments of the candidates documented in their CVs necessarily continued to be significant criteria, as in more conventional selection processes. The goals of the semi-anonymous procedure also competed with other legitimate aims, for example, of offering graduates of cluster-supported programmes at Konstanz the possibility of doing their doctoral work here. A semi-anonymous application process is no longer being used at the university. In contrast, the cluster's practice of appointing junior professorships (W1) with a tenure option proved to be a sustainable model for the entire university. The recruitment of four junior professors also helped to initiate the committee process and accelerated the establishment of binding guidelines for tenure procedures, which are now disclosed at the time of the job announcement. What other long-term consequences did the activities of EXC 16 have for the personnel situation? Professorships with multiple positions for postdocs and doctoral students have already been mentioned. Several recruiting formats introduced for the first time by EXC 16 have been continued by the two new clusters of excellence at the university. In particular, the inclusion of fellows from all over the world – indispensable for the internationality of the university – has been continued. This has also been planned, if also to a reduced degree, for the Cultural Studies Research Centre (*Zentrum für kulturwissenschaftliche Forschung, ZKF*), which will be the institutional successor of EXC 16. The centre's structure was outlined in the successful renewal proposal and is presented in section 4.3 below. The university also demonstrated its reliability in this realm and implemented the personnel plans outlined in the proposal: The positions of an



executive coordinator, an administrative coordinator and an editor for Konstanz University Press have been established permanently.

### **3.2 Promotion of early career researchers**

The cluster employed a variety of individualized, tailor-made measures to support its early career researchers: positions in the two doctoral programmes Cultures of Time and Europe in the Globalized World, in junior research groups and projects, its own postdoc positions, as well equal opportunity and transition scholarships. Early career researchers with positions funded by the University of Konstanz could be supported with invitations to the *Kulturwissenschaftliches Kolleg* and were eligible for all of the cluster's benefits and infrastructure services. This basic decision promoted the cluster's integration into existing university structures and prevented it from working at cross purposes to these or establishing its own parallel structures. This was also fostered by a close coordination of early career support with the *Zukunftskolleg*, the Institute for Advanced Study for Junior Researchers at Konstanz, which moreover allowed the cluster to profit from the institute's infrastructure, for instance, by providing completion fellowships for doctoral research. Conversely, humanities and social science fellows at the *Zukunftskolleg* who had research projects related to the cluster were closely integrated into its work.

The basic goal of promoting early career researchers in EXC 16 was to combine early academic independence, intensive supervision by established scholars and specific planning horizons. This was a response to the experience that the independence of early career researchers – which had been promoted institutionally in the recent past – can also lead to a kind of intellectual and institutional homelessness uncondusive to academic maturity and career advancement. In order to enable doctoral researchers to have an inspiring graduate school experience under realistic conditions and to pave the way for excellent young researchers to have promising academic careers, the cluster held intense discussions during its first funding period and adopted explicit guidelines for promoting junior researchers (*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 20/9/2009). These guidelines were oriented around the criteria of strict aptitude-based selection, the reliability of the support framework with an adequate time horizon, advice and supervision by peers and a shift from quantitative to qualitative productivity. In all of these, attention was paid that there was a balanced relationship between duty of care and self-responsibility. Beginning in 2009, the university, the *Zukunftskolleg* and the cluster also worked together on a concerted strategy of promoting junior researchers for the entire university that would ensure – while taking into consideration disciplinary differences – a reasonable balance between independence and supervision, comparable conditions for different career paths and thus the ability to formulate life plans. The basic principles of these concerns became the Konstanz Code of Practice for

Postdoctoral Researchers, which established the formal status and the rights of junior researchers in the postdoc phase. This regulation, which is still in effect, is part of the institutional legacy of EXC 16.

None of these measures were simply mandated, but were rather the result of deliberative consultation and learning processes, in which the early career researchers played a significant role. The cluster staff sent three voting representatives to the plenary assembly, and these representatives, if they had doctoral degrees, also participated in the evaluation of projects. Over the years, the cluster was able to develop a culture of leadership and cooperation that gave early career researchers significant latitude and intrinsic motivation for their active participation. In order to enable postdocs, doctoral researchers and supervisors to concentrate on qualification goals and original scholarship, care was taken to avoid a general overburdening through excessive institutional obligations. This group in particular profited from the numerous measures implemented by the cluster for equal opportunity and balancing research and family life (see section 3.3. below), for instance, prioritized placement in the university child care centre, completion and transition scholarships and overall support policies that were sensitive to issues of equal opportunity and family life.

Shortly after the establishment of the cluster, an experience that had repeatedly been observed elsewhere regarding collaborative research in the humanities and social sciences was confirmed: Interdisciplinarity takes time. For this reason, even before the beginning of the second funding period, the cluster established more realistic estimates about the time requirements for qualification, which funding institutions such as the DFG have since also adopted. The institutional successes of early career researchers at Konstanz demonstrate the long-term utility of such additional investments. Furthermore, the objective results of interdisciplinary work methods also had a catalysing effect on the participating fields. The funding periods for the qualification phase, however, had to correspond to these time requirements. For this reason, the cluster agreed early on to a guaranteed funding framework of three years for doctoral research projects, plus the possibility of evaluation-based completion support; for habilitation projects a four-year funding period was set, also with possible completion support.

The expectation that cluster-supported doctoral or postdoc projects would be original both thematically and methodologically was matched with an appropriate respect for the evaluation standards of the respective disciplines. All postdoc projects were reviewed to ensure that they offered realistic career perspectives in a highly competitive academic labour market, one that continues to be organized according to disciplines. The tension between doing research in an interdisciplinary environment, such as the cluster, and the necessity of producing research results

that resonate with a specific discipline was also addressed in lectures and organized discussions, as was the question of genuine quality standards in the humanities and social sciences. In applications for postdoc projects, a self-evaluation by the applicant was required as well as an evaluation by a mentor from a cluster discipline. All cluster-funded theses were written within the scope of discipline-specific study and examination regulations. A conscious decision was made not to establish an interdisciplinary doctoral programme exclusive to the cluster. In addition, to increase professional opportunities there were no overly specialized, unusual teaching assignments, for instance, in 'cultural studies', but rather classical disciplinary teaching qualifications.

The cluster was always aware that a portion of the doctoral candidates trained during the cluster's existence would not continue their careers at the university. However, the skills that the junior researchers acquired through work in crisis regions, the theoretically-informed experience with practitioners from business, politics and international organizations, their understanding of the legal bases of migration and integration processes and the straightforward contact with writers, artists and filmmakers at the *Kulturwissenschaftliches Kolleg* (artists in residence) can quickly lead to success on the job market for numerous positions at the intersections between politics, economics, media and science. The experience of the past years underscores this emphatically. Former academic staff found jobs in the fields of development aid and international cooperation after their time at the University of Konstanz. They now work in responsible positions as political consultants or deal professionally with basic strategic questions in various branches of public administration. They are also employed in the classic professional fields open to students of the humanities after completing their studies and obtaining a doctorate: working in schools, in journalism or in museums, etc. For this reason, the cluster could presume that its basic theoretical and historical orientation also opened up good or even outstanding professional opportunities for those junior researchers who did not choose a directly academic career.

Such career options outside of academics were also specifically supported in the sense of an ambitious, large-scale staff development. This diversity of support is one of the long-term lessons to be drawn from the Excellence Initiative. In Konstanz, the cluster contributed to a sustained institutional learning process within the university. The university's Academic Staff Development (ASD), with personnel funded by EXC 16, provided cluster members with appropriate and, in part, exclusive consultation services that were able to identify early on career paths in (leadership) positions in non-academic professional fields. This basic promotion of the early independence of junior researchers on all qualification levels was supported by various ASD services for career development, for example, job application training for academic appointments, consultation on acquiring necessary skills and inhouse coaching for career planning. This cooperation was intensified during the extension phase. Beyond this, the academic success of

former cluster members speaks for itself. Many early career researchers who were supported within the cluster or as junior fellows of the *Kulturwissenschaftliches Kolleg* received appointments as professors, including in Berlin, Bonn, Bremen, Chicago, Eichstätt, Erfurt, Freiburg, Giessen, Heidelberg, London, Mannheim, Sheffield, Sidney, Vienna and Zurich. Of the 14 doctoral students admitted to the programme Cultures of Time, 11 completed their dissertations. Eight of them currently work in academics: one as a professor, one as an academic administrator in Europe, one at an academy, and the others at universities in Basel, Hamburg, Konstanz, Vienna, and at a research institute in Cologne. Others are employed as teachers and journalists. We continue to keep records of the academic and non-academic career trajectories of former cluster and institute members; and the Institute for Advance Study's practice of regularly corresponding with alumnae and alumni will be continued at the Cultural Studies Research Centre (see section 4.3 below). Former members of the cluster and the institute meet at workshops and conferences throughout the world as well as in Konstanz. In addition, enquiries were made to former cluster members active in non-university fields who were open to acting as advisory contacts for future Konstanz doctoral candidates. A corresponding network will be established in cooperation with the ASD and university alumni relations. If the budget and the new fundraising allow it, there are also plans to implement a model that was tested for the first time during the cluster's extension period: Together with the *Berlin Haus der Kulturen der Welt*, a site of contemporary art and cultural critique, and the journal *Merkur*, a periodical of political and cultural essays, a postdoc position was established at each of the two institutions. The two appointees were integrated into the regular work of the Berlin partners, but also simultaneously pursued and developed their own research projects. In this way, it was possible to combine professional practice related to scholarship with the opportunity to establish career-building networks and further academic qualifications.

Even with the years of experience gathered at the University of Konstanz with cultural studies research training groups, collaborative research centres and research groups, the magnitude of an excellence cluster necessitated very specific governance measures. The establishment of several positions for academic coordination proved to be a blessing in this regard (see also section 4.1 below). The coordination staff set their own research accents and contributed significantly, under the strategic leadership of the principal investigators, to the development of the cluster programme. They were also exemplary for a pluralization of career paths in the German academic system that the cluster supported programmatically. Along with the executive coordinator and the academic and administrative personnel of the *Kulturwissenschaftliches Kolleg*, the coordination team was responsible for the communicative infrastructure within the cluster, the public dissemination of cluster research, the establishment and maintenance of international contacts and the facilitation of visiting scholars. Furthermore, the cluster also

supported in this way study programme initiatives that strengthened the interfaces between university teaching and the development of early career researchers.

The formation of this team proved to be indispensable. In order to be productive academically, the transverse dynamic that arose from dispensing with disciplinary segmentation had to be guided and oriented around specific topics. One responsibility of the academic coordinators was to support interdisciplinary exchange on these topics in scholarly as well as organizational terms. In this way, numerous institutional and substantive impulses in the cluster emanated from the coordinators. They relieved researchers of organizational duties, although most of the coordinators also engaged in their own research projects and were thus part of the academic staff that published monographs and articles. The central volume for the cluster topic, *Bürgerkriege erzählen. Zum Verlauf unziviler Konflikte* (Ferhabd begović / Weiffen 2011), was guided by this constellation. The coordinators also were responsible for developing and supporting key topics of the *Kulturwissenschaftliches Kolleg*, both in administrative and scholarly terms. In their important mediating position, they were also crucial for creating a working environment in which it was possible to articulate difficult mentoring issues and confidential problems.

A rigid separation of support and research was consciously avoided with this distribution of responsibilities. Because the coordinators were familiar through their own experience with the immanent logic of academic work and the resulting demands on administration, they were well-prepared to engage in academic coordination. Experience also showed that this kind of work is not necessarily detrimental to an academic career, but can actually be conducive to it under favourable conditions. Former academic coordinators of the cluster were able to obtain their own international research funding; a number of them currently hold (leading) positions in Frankfurt/Oder, Hamburg, Hannover, Jena and Stuttgart; others have been appointed professors in Chicago, Sheffield and Siegen. The ostensible contradiction between academic governance and academic careers, which was repeatedly invoked in public debates about the Excellence Initiative, proved to be reconcilable, at least for several of the positions in Konstanz.

The *Konstanzer Meisterklasse*, founded by sociologist Bernhard Giesen in 1999 and held annually until 2014, was one of the support instruments for doctoral and master's students. Once a year the *Meisterklasse* brought internationally renowned scholars such as Jeffrey Alexander, Fredric Barth, Hans Belting, Gottfried Boehm, Craig Calhoun, Saskia Sassen, John Searle, Richard Sennett, Hayden White and many others to Konstanz, where they participated in intensive discussions with younger fellows from around the world. Topics beginning in 2007 included Cultural Sociology and the Iconic Turn, Construction and Boundaries, Trauma and Narration, Clash of Cultures?, Performativity, Cultures of Emotions, Crisis and Collapse and

Demos Revolting. Summer schools and international seminars were also held under the auspices of EXC 16.

Research-related instruction has been a central element of the University of Konstanz from the beginning. The cluster reinforced the triad constitutive for research-oriented teaching – research, research-based learning, and learning in research – with thematically appropriate and up-to-date conceptions for study programmes that assumed model character within the university. The cluster created and promoted two innovative master's programmes: the Studies in European Culture programme and the International Administration and Conflict Management programme. These programmes were able to recruit outstanding students from Germany and abroad to the University of Konstanz and prepare them for research in cultural studies as practiced here. Early career researchers actively participated in these programmes, without, however, being obligated to teach research-related or more classical curriculum.

Both master's programmes were at the same time important instruments for internationalizing and establishing cooperative relationships that resulted in new research initiatives – for instance, on the topic 'similarity' (see section 2.1 above), an initiative that was conducted in cooperation with scholars from India and South Africa. Students were introduced to the methodological and substantive work of the excellence cluster and in this way optimally prepared for scholarly work in an interdisciplinary research network. Another example of such preparation was the cluster's support of student field research in master's programmes, when this was appropriate. To help excellent students transition as seamlessly as possible from finishing their degrees to beginning their doctoral programmes, the cluster offered six-month scholarships to prepare dissertation proposals.

Various funding formats of the cluster that targeted early career researchers were readjusted in the second funding period, especially in light of the goal of making cluster research more international and – in the case of newly appointed junior professors – of improving career perspectives at the University of Konstanz. If, initially, international research stays had primarily been the result of individual engagement and were favoured by more or less random personal contacts, in the extension period such stays were consciously supported and also co-financed after invitations establishing institutional involvement had been secured. Here it was also possible to draw on the substantial experience of two research training groups in literary studies, which had engaged in this important form of international networking. With the first junior professorship (History of the Humanities and Social Sciences), the cluster was only able to establish a position with a 'competitive tenure track' option (as already noted in section 3.1 above). All subsequent junior professorships had the option of the appointment becoming a full professorship (W3) through a 'non-competitive tenure track' process. The situation was more complicated with the

junior research groups. From the beginning, the appointment of research-group leaders proved to be difficult. There were doubts about the ability of candidates lacking sufficient experience to supervise doctoral dissertations. With more advanced applicants, in contrast, it was feared that they would receive offers for academic appointments (which in principle we supported) so quickly that new leaders of junior research groups would have to be found and that the latter would no longer be able to put together their groups on their own. In addition, it appeared that, in the humanities and social sciences, the model of the junior research group had limited compatibility with the qualification requirements of the individual fields. Finally, it turned out to be a problem that the leaders of the junior research groups competed with junior professors. Research-group leaders were placed on an equal footing with junior professors in terms of being entitled to award doctoral degrees in Konstanz; however, they lacked any adequate institutional status within the classic German university structure.

Nevertheless, the cluster decided to continue to have junior research groups in the second funding period. However, given the experiences in the first funding period, important changes were made in the conception of these groups within the codified strategy of the university: The choice of topics was defined more openly for junior research groups and their interdisciplinary dimension was reduced, as this had created unjustifiable uncertainties for doctoral candidates given the structured doctoral programmes in individual departments. The format of the junior research group – which is often very successful in the natural sciences, where research processes can be organized according to a division of labour – did not work well overall within the excellence cluster and was not included in the sustainability planning. Three former leaders of junior research groups in the cluster have since been appointed professors (a fourth group was first established in the current funding period). However, an ambitious interdisciplinary programme that involves the co-supervision of doctoral candidates from other disciplines frequently leads to a structural overburdening during the early and middle phases of a postdoc career in the humanities and social sciences. The cluster learned from this in two ways. First, it successfully implemented the model of a junior professorship with a tenure option at the university. Second, there had originally been plans to appoint as leader of a junior research group a particularly promising scholar who had just been awarded a doctorate in migration ethnology; instead this scholar was integrated into the research of the doctoral programme Europe in the Globalized World. Another junior research group leader position focussing on violence research could not be filled, despite an exhaustive search. The junior research group Revolts as Communicative Events in the Early Modern Period was established in the second funding period and was assembled from a single discipline, also out of consideration for the three junior researchers involved. The group proved to be extremely productive: the habilitation thesis of the group leader and the dissertations of the two doctoral candidates have been completed, and two anthologies are about to be completed.

We conclude here with some exemplary feedback from a cluster postdoc who was appointed to his first professorship while at the University of Konstanz:

In the course of my academic career, I have been supported through projects in various research training groups and have received a number of fellowships. I haven't encountered a team spirit comparable to that of EXC 16 in any of these other funding structures. The presence in a single space of so many inspiring people from different disciplines has made the University of Konstanz a special centre of encounter – one much less affected by competition and envy than other academic settings with which I'm familiar. Having worked and done research in the U.S. for a long time, I can now enjoy almost 'Californian' working conditions at Lake Konstanz.

### **3.3 Promotion of gender equality**

Equal opportunity functioned as both a structural element and guiding responsibility of the cluster. It was secured through suitable funding and the institutional presence of an equal opportunity representative on the executive board. A close cooperation between the cluster and the university's Office of Equal Opportunity, Family Affairs and Diversity was established during the first funding period and secured by financing 25% of a full-time position at the Office. The ongoing advice and support from the officer for gender mainstreaming was extremely valuable early on and continued in the extension period. These structures enabled the systematic implementation and continued development of equal opportunity efforts as well as the quick, unbureaucratic resolution of individual cases. The latter issue proved to be the greatest challenge over the years, but there were also remarkable successes here. The officer for gender mainstreaming was an advisory member in the plenary assembly and worked closely with the executive coordinator and the coordinating team. A tight linkage between the equal opportunity policies of the cluster and those of the university was achieved through regular strategy discussions between the executive level of the cluster and the Office of Equal Opportunity, Family Affairs and Diversity as well as through the participation of the cluster in the Gender AG (working group within the scope of the university's Institutional strategy *Modell Konstanz – Towards a Culture of Creativity*). One result of this intra-university cooperation was the Code of Practice on Gender Equality. The University of Konstanz was the first German university to adopt such a code.

The cluster pursued two goals with its equal opportunity policies: (a) an increase in the percentage of women, especially in the postdoc phase and as professors and (b) supporting the compatibility of research and family life, so that (junior) scholars with children were able to



conduct excellent research alongside their family responsibilities. To achieve these goals, a series of measures was implemented in the initial phase of the cluster and then further developed during the second period. Selection and appointment procedures were supported by equal opportunity representatives to ensure that equal opportunity was integrated as a part of the recruitment process. This was applied to professorships, junior research groups and postdoc positions, as well as to fellowships at the *Kulturwissenschaftliches Kolleg*. In this way, the cluster – which strove also to be a laboratory for institutional innovation – assumed a leading role within the university for equal-opportunity oriented practices in filling academic appointments and other positions. Targeted funding for dual careers was also successfully used to acquire or retain excellent scholars for the cluster. A pool of TVL-13 positions (each for up to two years) was created specifically for this purpose.

In addition, beginning in the first funding period, equal opportunity scholarships were budgeted in four funding lines (start-up/completion of doctoral research, start-up/wind-up postdoc phase). These scholarships were primarily for women, but also available for researching fathers with responsibility for at least half of family care. Overall, 47 such scholarships were awarded. It should be noted here that the cluster, in principle, favoured funding positions with mandatory social insurance and that equal opportunity scholarships were primarily awarded to bridge transitions between career phases. Furthermore, junior researchers had good prospects in the regular application process (funding for start-up, doctoral or other projects as well as wind-up funding) on the basis of the criteria ‘family components, nursing cases, personal circumstances’. This is demonstrated by the high percentage of women in the group of postdocs funded by the cluster – even if the numbers fluctuated over the years (with low case figures). In October 2017, 53% of postdocs were women (9 of 17 in the cluster). In the first years of the cluster (2008/09), the percentage of women was around 44% (4 of 9); on September 30, 2011, it was 67% (6 of 9); and in February 2015, 42% (8 of 17).

The financial support for junior researchers was supplemented with large-scale career support that was financed by the cluster and the university as part of the Institutional strategy *Modell Konstanz* (Academic Staff Development, Equal Opportunity, Research Support). Participation figures show that women researchers of the cluster actively made use of the specific advising and coaching services of the ASD as well as its seminars and training events. The same was true of the advising and grants for career promotion offered by the Equal Opportunity Council (trips to conferences, network meetings, continuing education opportunities, etc.) and the grants for travel and childcare costs for researchers with children. Between 2013 and 2018 alone, more than 80 advising sessions took place, about half of which dealt with applications for equal opportunity funding and family support and the other half with individual, career-related advice. The cluster

also had a cooperation agreement (2007-2011) with the Mentoring and Training (MuT) programme (sponsor: Conference of Equal Opportunity Officers at Universities and Academic Institutions in Baden-Württemberg [LaKoG]). The rather low usage of these services underscores the fact that customized on-site offerings were in high demand. The development and implementation of specific services to address the interests of women occurred in close cooperation between the cluster, ASD and the Equal Opportunity Council. To further promote the integration of established consultation expertise within the cluster, 25% of a full-time position was made available to the ASD in the second funding period.

In the realm of family support, researchers in the cluster were given access to child care services through the Office of Equal Opportunity, Family Affairs and Diversity. The cluster reserved six childcare places at the university child care facility Knirps & Co. In addition to the regular places, cluster members also had access to the flexible services provided by the university: short-term care, expansion of child care hours and emergency care (in cases of illness, career bottlenecks). In addition, the cluster provided support for financing child care (child care supplement with scholarships and fellowships, an increase of part-time positions to 70%) and for moving to Konstanz (relocation allowance, family apartments, school selection). Especially the fellows at the *Kulturwissenschaftliches Kolleg* profited from this. Master's students in the programme Studies in European Culture who had children received specific support for their required stay abroad. The cluster made great efforts to schedule sessions and events at family-friendly times and to provide child care at conferences. The activities of the cluster in this regard always dovetailed with the overall policies of the university.

The cluster also reflected repeatedly on its equal opportunity policies, especially during the first funding period (for example, in the workshop Equal Opportunity in the Excellence Cluster: Evaluating the Reality of the Measures – Further Developing Support Instruments in December 2009; in the Satisfaction Survey of Family Support that was part of the Survey of Non-Professorial Academic Personnel in the spring of 2010; the podium discussion Promoting Junior Researchers and Equal Opportunity – Between Aspiration and Reality at an internal cluster conference in July 2010; and an internal stocktaking of previous support in early 2011). The cluster also participated in the research project Women in Top Research at the University of Hamburg. The feedback report in May 2011 from this study expressly praised the equal opportunity activities and successes of the cluster's first funding period. The feedback report underscored in particular the 'clear targets', the scope of the measures, the close 'structural relationship' with the overall university provisions and committees as well as the involvement of the executive level.

The cluster had outstanding successes especially with regard to the careers of individual female colleagues, for whom great effort was made to provide intensive support. One such colleague who received long-term support from the cluster for field research was able to obtain an ERC starting grant. A female graduate of the doctoral programme Cultures of Time, who was supported in the postdoc phase with equal opportunity funding from the cluster, has now been appointed to her first professorship. Another colleague and alumna of the *Zukunftskolleg* unbureaucratically received bridge support from the cluster for a short period of time, before she assumed a position as junior professor at another university. One of the female doctoral candidates in a junior research group who received equal opportunity funding completed her habilitation elsewhere and is now applying for professorships. And a male colleague who had received support as part of a dual-career family was able to obtain his own DFG position.

The most visible and by far the most significant equal opportunity success of the second funding period was the appointment of four women to the four junior professorships with tenure option that the university established at the initiative of the cluster. Of the four full professorships (W3) that were established within the scope of EXC 16, two are currently held by women and two by men. All five of the current doctoral and postdoc positions affiliated with these professorships are currently held by women. Overall the personnel situation in the departments that participated in the cluster and were able to profit from its equal opportunity measures is currently (whereby, in 2013, the participating departments established the development targets for the percentage of women in the equal opportunity plan, which was in effect until 2018):

	<b>Doctoral researchers</b>		<b>Postdocs</b>		<b>Junior professors + independent postdoctoral researchers</b>		<b>Professors</b>	
<b>Department</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>Target</b>
Literature	74%	at least 65%	35%	60%	33%	55%	64%	50%
History and Sociology	50%	50%	30%	50%	40%	50%	30%	30%
Law	36%	48%	30%	50%	-	-	7%	24%
Politics and Public Administration	33%	50%	47%	50%	33%	50%	23%	30%
Philosophy	40%	40%	44%	30%	1 of 1	n.a.	0%	20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>49%</b>		<b>34%</b>		<b>40%</b>		<b>30%</b>	

Reporting date 1.12.2018 (source: Controlling Data Portal), targets until end of 2018 (source: equal opportunity plan)

## 4 Structures

### 4.1 Organization and management of the Cluster

#### *Academic self-organization and quality control*

From the beginning, it was a goal of the excellence cluster to organize external funding in such a way that it was possible to compensate for the burdens tied to the rise of this kind of funding in academics, that is, to significantly increase the time that all the participants dedicated to scholarly activities and simultaneously ensure that the cluster had a catalysing effect on the participating departments and the university as whole. In order to implement these structural goals and influence the long-term development of the university, the cluster was organized as a network with a flat hierarchy, whose funds were not allocated exclusively to the principal investigators, but rather were open to all researchers (from all status groups) in the departments formally affiliated with the cluster through membership agreements. In these membership agreements, the departments pledged to include the thematic and methodological interests of the cluster in the appointment of professors. Over time, a corresponding notification procedure was established and the representation of the cluster in appointments committees was formally regulated. The expectation was that, in this way, the cluster would exert a perceptible and lasting structural influence on the university.

Cluster funds were allocated for all research concerns – networking, internationalization and visibility – in a flexible and quality-oriented manner. Researchers could apply for these funds in formalized procedures in which decisions were made by the speaker, the executive board, the plenary assembly and the scholarly advisory board. Applications could always be submitted for workshops, research trips, publication subsidies and similar regularly occurring activities or expenses. Each year in the spring and fall, decisions were made about project set-ups, major conferences with larger budgets and invitations to the *Kulturwissenschaftliches Kolleg*. The rejections of projects, leaves of absence and invitation proposals were thoroughly explained in a protocol note and communicated to the applicants and proposers. Shortly after the beginning of the first funding period, the central organ of the cluster's academic self-organization – the plenary assembly – agreed to this procedure, in particular, to not communicating the reasons for decisions regarding the other application formats. The plenary assembly was composed of the principal investigators, the leaders of the junior research groups and initially two, and subsequently three representatives of the academic staff. It was supported in an advisory capacity by the executive coordinator, the officer for gender mainstreaming, the academic and administrative coordination of the *Kulturwissenschaftliches Kolleg* as well as the academic coordination for the promotion of junior researchers, which was in particular responsible for the two doctoral programmes. Newly appointed members of the participating departments were

regularly integrated into the plenary assembly if they demonstrated a keen interest in the research and discussions of the cluster.

The plenary assembly discussed and made decisions about funding applications between € 10,000 and € 130,000, that is, especially for project set-ups and for invitations to the *Kulturwissenschaftliches Kolleg*. These decisions were made on the basis of the submitted applications (the various forms for all funding formats were available on the cluster's intranet) along with two internal evaluations, and in some cases external evaluations as well (for instance, for postdoc extension applications). In selecting evaluators, care was taken that at least one of the two evaluators was familiar with the specialized focus of the application. The plenary assembly made the decisions about invitations to the *Kulturwissenschaftliches Kolleg* on the basis of recommendations from the small committee it appointed. This committee reviewed in advance the applications and proposals together with the specialized evaluations and sought to select a cohesive group of institute fellows for the coming year. The committee also presented the plenary assembly with a financially balanced proposal. Over the years, the plenary assembly became the site of intensive academic discussions across the disciplines. Even if its deliberations over funding decisions took place within a pragmatic context and thus inevitably involved allocation interests, over time a stable culture of open and constructive critique regarding applications and proposals developed. Intellectual issues stood in the foreground, accompanied by a sensitivity to the concerns of junior researchers that has expanded over the years. Thus, along with workshops and other events, the discussion of research projects in the plenary assembly proved to be an important catalyst for the cluster's academic and transdisciplinary self-conception, as this ensured not only effective internal quality control, but also continuing reflection on the research agenda, which simultaneously became a way of examining the decision-making criteria and their predictive power. This was the case, for instance, when extension applications had been submitted and the completed work could be compared with initial application proposals. For this reason, the cluster maintained close contact with the University of Konstanz's Quality Management Staff Unit, established within the framework of the third funding line. Quality Management conducted a qualitative survey inspired by the rector in the participating departments, which resulted in an internal and external view of the cluster that was methodologically controlled and very informative overall. One finding of the survey was that even the greatest possible procedural transparency in the cluster could not fully prevent the spread of rumours and misinformation.

The executive board of the cluster was selected by the plenary assembly and was composed of the speaker and five plenary assembly members, one of whom functioned simultaneously as the equal opportunity representative. The rector of the university was an advisory member of the

board. This mandate was used intensively especially during the set-up phase, during the time shortly before the submission of the renewal proposal and at the beginning of the second funding period, in particular to coordinate the strategies necessary for the cluster's structural sustainability planning. One of the academic staff – the executive coordinator – was also an advisory member of this professorial executive board. The executive coordinator presided over the aforementioned team of academic coordinators, organising the everyday operations of the cluster, ensuring the operative proximity between cluster and university administration and actively participating in the cluster's strategic and academic development, for which the speaker, the executive board and the plenary assembly were responsible. Beyond their strategic roles, the executive board and the plenary assembly were also charged with a task that was constitutive for the self-organization of the cluster: discussing and making decisions about numerous applications (with a funding volume ordinarily of up to € 10,000). The executive board was responsible, in particular, for decisions about publication subsidies and funding for equal opportunity support, also on the basis of written statements and following intensive oral deliberations about the applications. With the executive board as well, this laborious procedure of quality assurance bore the features of an interdisciplinary conversation, in which debates moved beyond disciplinary boundaries, for example, in discussing the quality of monographs and anthologies. The executive board provided intellectual stimulation in the narrower sense when making preliminary decisions about the annual topics of the *Kulturwissenschaftliches Kolleg* that were subsequently ratified by the plenary assembly, or when it determined the substantive profile of general cluster activities, for instance, a major conference on the concept of integration or the two cluster retreats held at Ittingen Charterhouse in Switzerland.

The scholarly advisory board of the cluster was composed of renowned scholars and public figures. Its members were selected by the plenary assembly and were then appointed to five-year terms by the rector and the speaker. This committee advised the cluster in all academic affairs, (occasionally) participated in academic quality control and, together with the executive board, made decisions about projects with funding over € 130,000. In the course of the two funding periods, the members of the scholarly advisory board included: Professor Christian Berndt, Professor Eva Geulen, Professor Dieter Grimm, Professor Salomon Korn, Professor Gudrun Krämer, Professor Ethel Matala de Mazza, Professor Lutz Raphael, Professor Dieter Langewiesche, Professor Ulrich Raulff, Professor Bo Stråth, Professor Monika Wohlrab-Sahr and Professor Peter Wagner. Especially for the renewal proposal and also for the draft proposal for the new application for the Excellence Strategy, the committee provided stimulating and helpful advice for the internal discussions.

The internal communication of the cluster was based less on obligatory events than on a fabric of intrinsically motivated networks that arose from the time-bound thematic interests of the various actors (principal investigators, project heads, early career researchers, doctoral candidates) and were reflected in the working groups, workshops, conferences and the key topics at the *Kulturwissenschaftliches Kolleg* as well as in joint publications. At manageable intervals, these initiatives and networks came together at the central cluster conferences and were documented and made visible to all the participants. These institutional agenda-settings by the cluster quickly resulted in successes, as is demonstrated by the resulting number of events, research initiatives and, above all, publications beginning in 2006.

The informal self-organization practiced in the cluster entailed significant decision-making responsibilities and time-consuming coordination processes. These can only be managed in the collegial setting of the university if they are supplemented with formalized decision-making structures that are reviewable and transparent. This basic model combining spontaneous and formalized processes proved indispensable for the interdisciplinary research dynamic. Nevertheless, it was also repeatedly discernible that the fundamental presuppositions for this are collegiality and a mutual respect that spans across all qualification levels. Because both were able to flourish here over the years, these resources were available to a sufficient degree whenever they were needed. In retrospect, this also shows that a cluster of excellence – at least, the type in Konstanz – thrives not only as scholarly institution, but also as a constellation of scholars.

#### *Kulturwissenschaftliches Kolleg (Institute for Advanced Study)*

As the first research network of this kind in the humanities and social sciences, the Konstanz cluster of excellence was pioneering in its decision to establish an Institute for Advanced Study. With this institute, the Konstanz cluster of excellence designed a research infrastructure tailored especially to the needs of the humanities and social sciences and their work forms and then, after the approval of the first proposal, successfully established it. This paralleled the recommendations of the German Council of Science and Humanities (WR) from January 2006 (Recommendations for the Development and Promotion of the Humanities in Germany) and to a certain extent anticipated the somewhat comparable programmes of the DFG (Centres for Advanced Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences) that drew on these recommendations as well as those of the BMBF (International Consortium for Research in the Humanities). The *Kulturwissenschaftliches Kolleg* in Konstanz was managed by an academic and administrative coordination team that answered to the adjunctive administrative office of the cluster speaker and the executive coordinator.

The function and operation of the institute developed quite differently than had initially been planned in the establishment proposal. Despite the high acceptance rate of invitations to Konstanz (there were no refusals, at most requests to postpone visits), our experience during the set-up phase of the institute was that the communicative exchange among the fellows as well as that between the institute and the cluster at times lacked the desired intensity. The response to this was threefold. First, already existing ties or planned collaborations with scholars in the cluster or connected to the cluster became an important selection criterion. Second, annual topics were identified at intervals, with cluster members preparing the work programmes for these in coordination with the executive board and the plenary assembly. Although not all fellows in a particular year belonged to such groups, overall these measures raised the internal cohesion and cooperation among the fellows to a new and satisfying level. Third, external fellows were regularly encouraged to hold workshops on their research projects (books or articles) in the rooms of the institute and to fulfil their supervising obligations for their home universities at their own 'doctoral student days' held in Konstanz. Funding was budgeted for all of these activities and could be applied for unbureaucratically. Like all cluster funding, this was also subject to the established procedures of quality assurance.

In this way the *Kulturwissenschaftliches Kolleg* was made into a centre of international networking for the cluster that directly incorporated junior researchers. This completely open and unencumbered exchange between junior fellows and senior fellows was a special feature of the Konstanz institute even by international standards. The Konstanz senior fellows, however, were rarely able to take their leaves of absence as pure research time at the Institute for Advanced Study, since as a rule it was not possible to delegate so many university obligations (examinations, administration). For this reason, the leaves of absence by scholars at the University of Konstanz were often taken as simple free semesters, which ultimately did not diminish their scholarly productivity. It did, however, become necessary to reinforce the institute's anchoring within the cluster in different ways. Various models were experimented with for internal leaves of absence. In addition to connections to concrete work projects with invited fellows, partial leaves of absence were also introduced. These absences were covered by 'supplemental professorships', so that the departments actually had more teaching capacity. In order to improve internal communication and ties to the departments, the cluster was able to persuade the former rector of the university, Gerhart von Graevenitz, to become a permanent fellow. Until his death, he exercised his responsibilities with great enthusiasm and also composed an outstanding monograph on Theodor Fontane during this time. One of his important responsibilities was participating in the weekly work meetings, which became far and away the most important exchange between the cluster and the Institute for Advanced Study. These meetings took place primarily at Bischofsvilla on the Seerhein, at least twice a semester as part of the cluster



colloquium at the university. After von Graevenitz's death, Aleida Assmann and Wolfgang Seibel were named permanent fellows.

In retrospect, the annual topics, which were implemented for the first time in 2008/09, and the groups of internal and external fellows who determined them were important catalysts for the development of research discussions within the entire cluster. The annual topics at the Institute for Advanced Study were:

- Hegemonial Semantics (2008/2009)
- Planned Peripheries (2009/2010)
- Culturalization (2010/2011)
- Non-Knowledge (2011/2012)
- Bureaucracy (2014/2015)
- Religious Minorities (2015/2016)
- The Public Sphere and Representation (2017/2018)

#### *Coordinating team*

A further measure, which was already mentioned in section 3.2 above and served to give the scholars participating in the cluster more time for their research, was the establishment of a coordinating team. Along with the executive coordinator and the administration of the Institute for Advanced Study, this team was responsible for the communicative infrastructure within the research network, the public dissemination of cluster research, the establishment and stabilization of international contacts as well as the facilitation of guests. Furthermore, the cluster also supported study programme initiatives that strengthened the connections between university instruction and the training of junior researchers. The coordinators also worked on special academic initiatives and prepared and supervised external collaborations. The establishment of a strong coordinating team, which consisted of up to eight staff members as well as the executive coordinator, proved to be indispensable in providing technical and organizational support to cluster scholars on all qualification levels and in efficiently shaping the self-governance of the cluster. The need for this kind of coordination arose from the open structure of the cluster: In order to be academically productive, the transverse dynamics made possible by dispensing with conventional disciplinary segmentation had to be guided and oriented around particular topics. The academic coordination team supported interdisciplinary exchange on such key topics academically as well as organizationally. Four of the overall seven annual topics at the *Kulturwissenschaftliches Kolleg* can be traced back in large part to initiatives of the coordinators, who were actively involved in integrating invited fellows. In light of their position bridging scholarly research and coordinating administrative responsibilities, the coordinators in particular were the

object of the respectful policies of promoting early career researchers sustainably within the cluster (see section 3.2 above).

#### *Public relations, knowledge transfer, data management*

The research of the cluster, especially those topics that focused on the integration of people with immigrant backgrounds (including refugees), addressed fiercely contested issues. With the so-called refugee crisis of 2015, the immigrant debate became more heated, and, in the subsequent years, positions polarized even further. In terms of knowledge transfer, the cluster's research sought to enrich the public discussion of issues by providing not only concrete cause for thought, but also theoretical underpinnings. This included juxtaposing the primarily normative understanding of integration in public debates with an open-ended and neutral conception.

Contemporary conflicts caught between the poles of integration and disintegration were the focus of major conferences (Constitutional Patriotism in a Migration Society; Is the Concept of Integration Obsolete? Theoretical Versions of a Controversial Debate; Under the Spell of Assimilation; Civil Wars), of podium discussions, colloquia, lectures and lecture series as well as readings, to which not only an academic audience, but also the general public was invited. With the 'young', discursive event format Foyer Research, the cluster involved the citizens of Konstanz in debates about controversial social topics, from deportation to populism. The cluster was also a part of a highly publicized exhibition, a cooperation with the renowned *Deutsches Hygiene-Museum in Dresden* (DHMD). In the second funding period, a cooperation with the *Haus der Kulturen der Welt* in Berlin was established. The cluster also initiated an exchange with the journal *Merkur* that initially allowed a junior researcher to work as a temporary member of the journal's editorial staff. A symposium entitled 'Integration by Signature? The Practicality of Integration Agreements in Integration Law', conceived by Daniel Thym and hosted by the Konstanz Science Forum, received significant support from the cluster. This led to the participation of Baden-Württemberg's Minister for Integration Bilkay Öney at events and a visit from Minister of State to the Federal Chancellor and Federal Commissioner for Migration, Refugees and Integration, Annette Widmann-Mauz. In order to awaken interest in science and research at an early age, the cluster also organized events for children (Pirate Day) and for secondary school students (University Day on the topic 'What holds Europe together? The Cultural Dimension of the European Union').

Scholars participating in the cluster garnered significant media attention, not only as a result of events and academic awards, but especially through their book publications. Researchers with local ties found particular resonance in the regional press, for example, the cross-border project on the topic 'Social Integration in Multicultural Societies. An Analysis of Neighbourhoods in the

Cities of Konstanz and Kreuzlingen'. The expert report on the dispute about burkinis in public swimming pools, written by a cluster member for the city of Konstanz, received major regional and national attention. The report helped defuse and ultimately resolve the public controversy. Powerful journalistic formats (background articles, interviews, audio and video clips of events), which are available on the cluster website, also disseminated knowledge to a broader public. Already in the course of the first funding period the website developed into a central informational platform, internally as well as externally. To ensure the sustainability of the information, the data infrastructure storing key information about the cluster's research activities (participating persons, research projects, publications) was transferred to the University of Konstanz's newly available research platform SciKon (<https://scikon.uni-konstanz.de>) at the end of the first funding period.

The cluster of excellence established its own periodical magazine in the first funding period which was continued in the extension phase. The magazine, written in a comprehensible style, presented information about cluster research to the press and the general public, providing a compendium of research on the cultural foundations of social integration. Cluster members and institute fellows described their research in an accessible form, either in their own essays or in interviews with the academic coordinator responsible for public relations and knowledge transfer. To promote the global reception of its research results, the cluster also established a comprehensive translation service. During both funding periods, translators and proof readers rendered numerous articles, anthologies and monographs into English, French, Spanish, Russian and Italian with funding from the cluster. During the second funding period, early career researchers increasingly made use of this service to publish their research in other languages, especially English. The central institutional repository of the University of Konstanz (<http://kops.ub.uni-konstanz.de>) provides bibliographical and publicly-accessible records of all of the cluster's publications. Whenever possible, open access to full-text versions have been made available here.

### *Konstanz University Press*

Konstanz University Press (KUP) is the cultural studies publishing house of the University of Konstanz. Established in 2010 on the initiative of the cluster and in cooperation with an established scholarly press (Wilhelm Fink Verlag), KUP is a unique undertaking in the German academic landscape. In contrast to other university presses in Germany, KUP is not an 'in-house' publisher, but instead selects its titles according to the principles of major English-language university presses. Like the overall cluster programme, KUP was developed from the rich tradition of cultural studies theory, as it has been practiced in Konstanz for years. Situated at the interface between university and society, the press creates a public forum for scholarship. Books published by KUP are regularly reviewed in the national press. After Brill Deutschland took over Fink Verlag, KUP began a collaboration with Wallstein Verlag in 2018. With this new

collaboration, the permanent establishment of an editor position and the relocation of the press to the Cultural Studies Research Centre, KUP has become a central building block of the cultural studies profile reinforced by the cluster at the University of Konstanz. Through the presence of the brand, the publishing house contributes to its institutional focus; as an imprint, KUP strengthens and diversifies the programme of a renowned publisher.

The publication strategy pursued by the cluster was reflected in the fundamental programmatic decisions of KUP. It was never conceived as a privileged publishing site for self-financed anthologies of the cluster or the University of Konstanz. Instead KUP established a programme of highly-regarded German and international authors regardless of their institutional affiliation. The success of this strategy is evident not least in the fact that numerous junior researchers who published their qualification projects with KUP have since been appointed to academic positions in Germany and abroad.

KUP's publishing independence made it possible to collaborate closely with the cluster in prominent cases and to publish topical contributions on integration and disintegration. This was the case for two volumes published in 2011, *Bürgerkriege erzählen. Zum Verlauf unziviler Konflikte* and *Transit Deutschland. Debatten zu Nation und Migration*, the first comprehensive documentation of the migration debate in Germany beginning in the 1950s, as well as a volume published in cooperation with the DHMD in 2014, *Das neue Deutschland. Von Migration und Vielfalt*. Publications by fellows at the Institute for Advanced Study were also included in the KUP programme, for instance, Levent Tezcan's monograph, *Das muslimische Subjekt* (2012). Through the Wolfgang Iser Lecture, renowned authors such as Geoffrey H. Hartman, Wolfgang Kemp and Franco Moretti have also been published by KUP.

Monographs comprise the vast majority of the KUP programme. In order to expand the variety of book types that KUP publishes, a series of pointed essays was developed that explores specific research fields and provides stimuli for further debates. To mention just a few examples here, Valentin Groebner's two volumes (*Wissenschaftssprache*, 2012; *Wissenschaftssprache digital*, 2014) on the 'language of science', which examined several disciplinary language games of cultural studies and their deformations; *Borken* (2012) by Georges Didi-Huberman, winner of Theodor W. Adorno Prize in 2015, a very personal theoretical and historical examination of the sole photographic evidence from the gas chambers in the crematorium at Auschwitz-Birkenau; or Thomas Steinfeld's trenchant intellectual profile of the inextricable connection between modernity and self-optimization (*Ich will, ich kann*, 2016) and Judith Butler's attempt to amend and update critical theory (*Rücksichtslose Kritik*, 2019).

Most recently, KUP has introduced the series *ethno|graphien* into its programme, which focuses on urgent contemporary issues while providing a platform for long-term efforts in Konstanz to clarify the relationship between literature and anthropology both historically and systematically. These ethnographies are characterized by a self-reflective narrative structure, which allows the authors to provide information about how the material presented was produced as well as its location in the world. Through a thematic spectrum from non-Western tribal cultures (Brown, *Stromaufwärts*, 2012; Severi, *Das Prinzip der Chimäre*, 2018; *Objekte als Personen*, 2019) to the central institutions of contemporary Western culture (Latour, *Die Rechtsfabrik*, 2016; Caduff, *Warten auf die Pandemie*, 2017), the series cultivates the necessary sensitivity to the diversity of experiential spaces and symbolic orders. In this way, ethnographies are an indispensable form for describing the social world. Through their special approach to their subject matter, they open modern societies to possibilities of understanding themselves that go beyond their hegemonic forms of self-description while astonishing readers with surprising insights into the formative processes of sociality.

Over the past years, KUP has become firmly established as an address for cultural studies publications. The number of unsolicited manuscripts it receives has increased steadily. The editorial board, composed of nationally and internationally acclaimed scholars, determines which manuscripts are included in the programme. The majority of board members are not faculty at the University of Konstanz and all of them are known beyond their fields for their articles and books. Past and present board members include: Professor Wolfgang Eßbach (Freiburg), Professor Monika Domman (Zurich), Professor Gudrun Gersmann (DHI Paris, subsequently Cologne), Professor Michael Hagner (ETH Zurich), Professor Albrecht Koschorke (Konstanz), Professor Kirsten Mahlke (Heidelberg, now Konstanz), Professor Christoph Menke (Frankfurt am Main), Professor Bernd Stiegler (Konstanz) und Professor Dieter Thomä (St. Gallen). KUP's excellent reputation is due, in great part, to the revival of a professional academic editor. As noted above, this position, which was established by the cluster, has now been made permanent. After an embargo period and, in some cases, even simultaneous with publication, KUP makes many final print versions freely and permanently accessible to everyone (green or golden open access).

## **4.2 Relationship between the Cluster, the host university and the participating partners**

Through its statutes and the resolutions of the responsible university bodies, the cluster was institutionalized as an independent part of the university. Its statutes, drafted by the speaker of the proposal group together with the other principal investigators following the initial approval of the proposal, were debated and adopted by the Senate and the University Council in Konstanz.

They were among the first cluster statutes in Germany and had to invent the cluster as an institutional entity. The new central institution was represented in the self-governing organs of the university on all levels and could participate in all decisions that affected its interests and the cultural studies research priority at the university. No attempt was made to establish the cluster's institutional independence vis-à-vis the faculties and departments, and this would also have contradicted the cooperative forms practised in Konstanz as well as the university's institutional identity. This decision would later be affirmed by the Imboden Commission's report, which warned of the centrifugal effects that would arise if clusters of excellence had too much strategic independence. Thus, while the Konstanz cluster was an independent institution from the start, it did not work at cross purposes to the departments and faculties of the university. Responsibility for the cluster rested with the principal investigators and with the speaker, who was elected by them and confirmed by the Senate. The coordination of structural planning took place in university bodies or directly in bilateral exchange with the Rectorate.

This structurally grounded cooperation with the university allowed the cluster to participate actively in the university's profile building and strategic development. The cluster of excellence regularly took part in negotiations for the appointments and reappointments of faculty that were important for the cultural studies research priority, even beyond the cluster professorships, in order to balance out the limitations of the university's resources. The university and the cluster were particularly successful in this regard with colleagues from history and literary studies as well as from sociology. With support from the cluster, for example, the sociology department was able to appoint an internationally renowned migration sociologist to the professorship of microsociology. Her methodological profile enriched the cluster's research on cultural studies and legal migration. She is now a co-speaker of the newly approved cluster The Politics of Inequality.

According to cluster regulations, the formal co-operating partners listed in the proposal were also entitled to obtain funding from the cluster. However, it soon became clear that the scholarly – in the narrowest sense of the term – nature of this network, which rapidly expanded to a multiplicity of rather informal partnerships and whose more stable nodes could vary, had to be cultivated in particular through invitations to the Institute for Advanced Study and concrete joint research activities. For this reason, close personal contacts that were institutionally supported played an important role here, for example, in the initiation and development of the cultural-studies paradigm 'similarity' or in the establishment of temporary 'research tandems' at the Institute for Advanced Study, for example, in the areas of ancient history and literary studies. The focus groups at the institute also provided an opportunity to expand existing collaborations and to establish new ones. The cluster appealed to its academic partners worldwide, not as a formal entity with mandatory procedures for funding allocation, but rather with its stimulating intellectual environment.

### 4.3 Sustainability

In accord with the provisions of the Excellence Initiative, EXC 16 in Konstanz was set up from the beginning in such a way that a significant portion of it segments could exist beyond 2017. This is the reason for its specific architecture. The cluster was designed neither as a large-scale collaborative research centre nor as a loose association of the participant's temporary projects, but rather as a complex institutional framework of professorships, fellowships, research projects as well as support for doctoral and master's students. Its culture of quality was oriented around the established procedures in Konstanz of internal and, if necessary, external evaluations and even developed these procedures further. Accordingly, cluster structures and processes blended organically into the university so that several of them have, as planned, been maintained seamlessly and continue to support the university's cultural studies research priority. The planning for this occurred in coordination with the Rectorate and with support from the Baden-Württemberg State Ministry of Science, Research and the Arts (MWK). These plans were ratified and incorporated into the renewal proposal and also convinced the group of evaluators.

The university and the State of Baden-Württemberg thereby ensured that the scholarly agenda, structural measures and strategic concepts promoted in this programme could be continued with the necessary sustainability even after funding for the cluster expired in October 2019. The State of Baden-Württemberg has affirmed its sustainability commitment, although the availability of the funding is still dependent on a formalized written report to be presented in November 2019 and a (successful) audit scheduled for late January 2020. The amount of sustainability funding is based on the state's portion of the respective excellence project. For the cluster of excellence, this is around € 1.4 million. The sustainability planning agreed to with the university stipulates that the five professorships established by the cluster be made permanent. Four professorships from departments that participated in the cluster were rededicated for this purpose. State sustainability funds will assure that the positions for three early appointments initiated by the cluster at the junior professor (W1) level will continue to be funded until the departure of the current appointees by 2022 at the latest. With the cluster professorships and the early reappointments, the cluster was able to contribute significantly to shaping the academic profile of the university. The professorships were not conceived as research professorships and have been integrated into the participating departments as both research and teaching positions. In each individual case, the official descriptions of the professorships consciously deviated from the conventional fields of study or at least interpreted them in innovative ways. Perhaps the most important result of this process institutionally has been the growth in the field of anthropology, currently with one full professorship (W3 position) and one junior professorship with tenure option and beginning in 2021 with two full professorships (W3 positions). Anthropology at the University of Konstanz has an excellent reputation nationally and internationally. With the other three professorships

(Cultural Theory, History of Religions and History of Knowledge) as well, it is expected that the professors will continue to play an important role in the development of the research focus on cultural studies in Konstanz. With the early appointments, the cluster was exemplary in initiating discussions about respectful tenure track procedures.

Beyond this, state sustainability funding will be used primarily for a Cultural Studies Research Centre (*Zentrum für kulturwissenschaftliche Forschung, ZKF*). The Senate resolved to establish such a centre in early 2017 and passed the statutes for it in summer semester 2019. In its basic features, the ZKF will be oriented around EXC 16 as well as the statutes of the two new Konstanz Clusters of Excellence Centre for the Advanced Study of Collective Behaviour and The Politics of Inequality, although in its decision-making structures it will be adapted to the new financial scope and amended objectives. The bodies of the ZKF, anchored in the structure of the university, will be able to assume their work in the course of winter semester 2019/2020. The centre will be led by a director; in addition to the executive board there will be an expanded executive board and a plenary assembly, which will provide non-professorial centre members extensive participation. The advisory board, composed primarily of internationally acclaimed scholars who are not based in Germany, will ensure a critical and constructive external perspective. The centre, which will be evaluated externally at regular intervals, is intended to function as an internationally visible institutional and academic catalyst for cultural studies at the university. To this end, it will bring together basic research and theoretical studies in the humanities and social sciences. As the successor to EXC 16, it will combine the broadest possible spectrum of cultural studies approaches with thematic issues from antiquity to the present in great geographical breadth. The centre understands itself as a laboratory of cultural studies research that is open to all university members and invited (international) guests, where not only new topics, approaches and methods between the disciplines can be developed and tested, but also institutional innovations can supplement established structures.

Beyond this, the ZKF will continue to ensure, within the scope of its financial possibilities, outstanding research conditions for cultural studies at the university and thereby increase the prospects of obtaining external funding. This includes a viable infrastructure supporting participating researchers in all organizational, logistical and application-related concerns. In this regard, the centre is especially committed to supporting scholars in the early stages of their careers and will encourage their participation in developing and designing the centre's research programme. Accordingly, the ZKF will not merely be a platform or 'incubator' of different project initiatives pursuing their own logics or a pure service facility. Instead, through intensive interdisciplinary collaboration, it will rapidly be able to establish its own academic profile, which, inspired by the previous agenda of EXC 16, will break new ground. In addition to its decision-



making bodies, the centre will also have an executive coordinator, an administrative coordinator, and the editor of Konstanz University Press. All three of these positions are permanent. It is likely that the centre will be able to continue using Bischofsvilla on the Seerhein, the building in which the *Kulturwissenschaftliches Kolleg* (established by EXC 16) was housed. The institute's programme, including the regular incorporation of (international) fellows, will also be continued, albeit on a smaller scale.

## 7 Appendix A (Non-Confidential)

### 7.1 Most important publications of the Cluster

- Amslinger, Julia, Eine neue Form von Akademie. „Poetik und Hermeneutik“ – die Anfänge, Paderborn: Wilhelm Fink 2017.
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- Eiden-Offe, Patrick, *Die Poesie der Klasse. Romantischer Antikapitalismus und die Erfindung des Proletariats*, Berlin: Matthes & Seitz 2017.
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