



#9

NEWS FROM THE GUTENBERG RESEARCH COLLEGE

Dear Colleagues,

The annual celebration of the Gutenberg Research College in May is the festive highlight of the year and a welcome occasion to reflect our recent work and to look ahead. With this newsletter, I would like to inform you about the eventful time at the GRC since May 2018 and about our future plans. For the Faculty of Catholic and Protestant Theology as well as for the scholars throughout the Rhine-Main region who are engaged in the research and interpretation of the Bible as a religious document and unique cultural asset, it was an unforgettable highlight of academic exchange: **Adela Yarbro Collins** and **John J. Collins** came from Yale University to Mainz and were awarded the Gutenberg Research Award 2018. With this award, the GRC honored the outstanding research achievements and the high international reputation of the two US scholars, who have set milestones for theology and religious studies. Their

colleagues here made use of the expertise of the two for an intensive exchange of ideas, for lectures and discussions, especially including younger academics and students.

Thereby, the concept of the Gutenberg Research Award was implemented in an exemplary manner, because the award shall not only honor outstanding research personalities, but it is also intended to initiate and promote international exchange and further cooperation through the presence of the award winners in Mainz. The Faculty of History and Cultural Studies has picked up the ball: In 2019, the French historian **Corine Defrance** from the CNRS and the Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, Sirice, will receive the Gutenberg Research Award. Corine Defrance has rendered outstanding services to the reappraisal of the history of Franco-German relations and has presented a large number of publications on this subject, which are now regarded as standard works



*from left to right:
Thomas Hieke,
John J. Collins und
Adela Yarbrow Collins,
Stefan Müller-Stach
(Foto: Ruben Zimmermann)*

on the development of Franco-German relations after the Second World War. The department will use her stay in Mainz for several lectures and discussion events. That is the way it should be and I would like to take this opportunity once again to encourage my colleagues at the JGU to nominate outstanding personalities from the scientific community for the **Gutenberg Research Award**. The call is published in the summer semester - the deadline for submission is the end of November 2018. Speaking of advertising, I would like to move straight on to the GRC funding instrument "**Zielgerade**" and invite you to nominate candidates by the end of October. The "Zielgerade" fellowship grants researchers at JGU funds for the exemption from teaching for two to three semesters so that they can concentrate fully on completing a well-advanced research project. Especially at the end, such an "80% project" must

be given full power, time and attention in order to achieve 100% completion at an excellent quality level without any distractions and with the highest concentration. The GRC "Zielgerade" fellowship can provide the necessary support for this. In the course of 2018 and 2019, the GRC again awarded several fellowships, which led to a considerable enrichment for the respective departments and the colleagues in their field of research and arts. The spectrum ranges from contemporary art, musicology, Biblical archaeology and the geodynamics of magmatic systems to cloud physics and neurodevelopmental biology. You can read more about the individual fellows in this newsletter. It is the goal and the first task of the GRC to sustainably strengthen the research potential of the JGU by supporting excellent scientists. Here, too, you are invited to nominate outstanding people from Germany and abroad for

such a fellowship. The managing director of the GRC, Dominik Bohl, and I will be happy to meet you and provide advice about a possible application for a colleague.

The second core task of the GRC is to advise university administration on strategic research issues. In this context, the members of the GRC executive committee remember two extraordinary highlights from the last year. In June 2018, the final preparations for the review of the full proposals for clusters of excellence within the framework of Germany's Excellence Strategy program were due, and the JGU still had the **PRISMA+** (Precision Physics, Fundamental Interactions and Structure of Matter) proposal for the cluster of excellence in the race. The GRC executive committee had already provided substantial feedback in the run-up to the application (see Newsletter #8). In the "**rehearsal**", the GRC members and some external experts acted as an international expert group and, after presentation and controversial discussion, gave a critical final feedback – as always in the sense of collegial esteem, fact-oriented and constructive. At the end of the rehearsal, it was clear to all: Exceptional researchers of JGU submitted an excellent proposal with PRISMA+, at the same time there were numerous suggestions for the performance at the actual hearing. Our colleagues

from PRISMA+ and the university administration seized their opportunity, entered the competition self-confidently and finally acquired the cluster of excellence. The effort and work were more than worth it.

In the meantime, the state government of Rhineland-Palatinate has decided on the **continuation of the Research Initiative of the Federal State of Rhineland-Palatinate** beyond 2018, and the university authorities have developed a procedure for the effective use of the funds. The GRC executive committee did not play a key role in decision-making, but rather in the consultation: A procedure was developed to evaluate the applications for **excellence projects (6) and research platforms (11)** received by the end of December 2018. Within the time available, this procedure offered a maximum of perspectives and expertise from within and outside the JGU. Highlights were **two workshops** of three resp. two days in February and March 2019: The GRC executive committee and few other experts had received the applications as well as at least two external reviews each, and in the course of the discussion up to four applicants were critically interviewed on the individual projects and platforms. Again, the panel then gave intensive advice and weighed up the projects according to objective criteria,

discussed strengths and weaknesses, risks and opportunities, argued controversially and finally sought mutually agreed solutions. The GRC gave the recommendations to the university authorities at the end of March. The funding decision will be presented to the JGU Senate in April 2019. The procedure itself and above all the workshops were complex and exhausting, and as GRC director I would like to take this opportunity to thank all colleagues involved for their commitment, their critical and constructive contributions and the high degree of objectivity and goodwill as well as the pronounced will to come to sensible solutions.

The GRC also provides **support for strategic appointments** of new JGU professors through GRC fellowships. Two departments of JGU have proactively nominated outstanding scholars, which they want to win for Mainz University, and we as GRC are pleased to be able to make a decisive contribution to an attractive offer. You are welcome to approach me at an early stage and discuss if we can support you on behalf of the GRC as well.

If you realize while reading this newsletter that the GRC with its activities can also provide something interesting for your research, the GRC managing director Dominik Bohl and the GRC director (from fall 2019 on my successor) will be happy to talk about it with you.



Cordially,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas Hieke". The script is cursive and elegant.

Thomas Hieke
Director of the Gutenberg Research College



Research Initiative of Rhineland-Palatinate

The GRC executive committee supported the university leadership with the selection procedure for excellence projects and research platforms, which shall be supported by the state Rhineland-Palatinate in the coming years.

Both funding lines serve the long-term financing of mono- or interdisciplinary associations of researchers at JGU, partly in cooperation with extramural research as well as with further universities of the Rhine-Main region. The goals are the strengthening of joint research, enhancement of national and international visibility as well as fundraising of suitable collaborative research projects.

The university authorities of JGU asked the GRC for recommendations to support their decision making process. Therefore, external expert opinions were obtained and workshops were held in February and March to develop recommendations based on the proposals, expert opinions and discussions with the respective applicants. The President and the Vice President for Research and Early Career Academics will present their decision to the Senate in April 2019.

NEW FELLOWS



Prof. Parastou Forouhar
Mainz Academy of Fine Arts,
JGU

Parastou Forouhar, one of the most prominent voices in Iranian contemporary art, joins the Mainz Academy of Fine Arts as a GRC fellow. The internationally acclaimed artist is also known for her political commitment against repression and violence and as a mediator between cultures. The life and work of the artist are exemplary for the transcultural handling of oriental and occidental traditional languages of form. During the five-year funding phase, Forouhar will establish and lead an extraordinary artistic class at the Mainz Academy of Fine Arts, where she will make use of a wide variety of artistic media and introduce her specific transcultural view on the international contemporary art discourse to the students and audiences in Mainz.



Prof. Boris Kaus
Institute of Geosciences,
JGU

Boris Kaus has been Professor of Geophysics and Geodynamics at JGU since 2011. He investigates the formation of geological systems and works on the identification of the physical processes that dominate the development of the systems. He translates geological phenomena into mathematical equations and is able to simulate millions of years in only a few days by numerical modelling. He has received several awards for his research, among others from the European Geosciences Union and the German Geophysical Society. In addition, he has already won several renowned ERC Grants. As a GRC fellow, he will deepen his research on physics of magmatic processes and develop new research areas at the interface of geophysics and seismology.



Dr. Martina Krämer
Institute of Energy and
Climate Research,
Forschungszentrum Jülich

Martina Krämer is an internationally renowned expert in the field of cloud physics, especially with regard to the influence of ice clouds on the climate through radiation effects. She works both experimentally and with numerical models and has recently made a groundbreaking contribution to ice cloud research with a new classification of the formation of ice clouds. In her research in the field of atmospheric physics, she performs in situ measurements of ice crystals and water vapor with the help of airplanes as well as computer-based modelling of ice clouds. As a GRC fellow, Martina Krämer, in cooperation with the Institute for Atmospheric Physics in Mainz, will investigate the influence of ice clouds on the earth's energy budget and thus enable a more precise assessment of their climate effect.



Prof. Klaus Pietschmann
Department of Art History
and Musicology, JGU

Klaus Pietschmann is known as one of the leading German musicologists whose research ranges from the Middle Ages to the 20th century and who combines musicological with transdisciplinary cultural-historical approaches. Over the last 15 years, he has significantly contributed to the implementation of Digital Humanities in the field of musicology by developing innovative database solutions as well as one of the first hybrid editions in musicology. As a GRC fellow, he will focus in particular on the reciprocal relationship between music and sacral architecture in the early modern period and on the further development of authority file-based source and repertoire research in the context of digital musicology.



Prof. Marion Silies
Institute for Developmental
Biology and Neurobiology,
JGU

Following her doctorate in Münster, Marion Silies conducted her postdoctoral research at Stanford University and headed the Emmy Noether- and ERC-funded junior research group "Visual Processing" at the European Neuroscience Institute in Göttingen before coming to Mainz in 2019 as Professor of Neurobiology. In Mainz, she will combine her experience in the fields of neuronal development and functional neurobiology and continue her research on the cellular mechanisms and neuronal networks of information processing in the brain, in particular the processing of visual information in *Drosophila*.



Prof. Wolfgang Zwickel
Department of Old
Testament Studies and
Biblical Archaeology, JGU

Since 1998, the theologian Wolfgang Zwickel has been researching and teaching as Professor of Old Testament and Biblical Archaeology at JGU. He has published numerous important works in historical topography and biblical archaeology, including a standard work on the Temple of Solomon. Most recently, he was the first German researcher to receive the Sy Gitin Fellowship for a research stay at the W.F. Albright Institute in Jerusalem. He will use this research stay and his GRC funding to bring the long-awaited publications on the excavations in Kinneret, one of the largest and most important Early Iron Age settlement sites in Israel, to a successful conclusion.

Awards and Research Projects

GRC fellow **Edward Lemke** coordinates a new DFG Priority Programme “Molecular Mechanisms of Functional Phase Separation” to investigate intrinsic disordered proteins and their functions in the cell.

The DFG Research Training Group “Life Sciences – Life Writing: Boundary Experiences of Human Life between Biomedical Explanation and Lived Experience” will be funded for a second period of four and a half years. **Mita Banerjee**, GRC Fellow from 2010 to 2015, acts as co-speaker of the Research Training Group.

Wolfram Ruf, member of the GRC executive committee, coordinates the new international Innovative Training Network “TICARDIO”, in which former GRC fellow **Hugo ten Cate** and his research group in Maastricht are also involved. The network focusses on biomedical processes of cardiovascular diseases.

GRC fellow **Donald Dingwell** receives an ERC Advanced Grant for his research about “Experimental Access to Volcanic Eruptions: Driving Observational Potential” (EAVESDROP).

Molecular biologist **Helle Ulrich**, member of the GRC executive committee, receives an ERC Proof-of-Concept Grant for her research about the ubiquitin system. In addition, she becomes speaker of the new DFG Collaborative Research Center “Regulation of DNA Repair and Genome Stability”.

GRC fellow **Thomas Metzinger** becomes member of the “High-Level Expert Group on Artificial Intelligence”. The philosopher supports the EU Commission in the implementation of a European strategy for artificial intelligence.

The theoretical physicist **Johannes Henn** has been appointed as director of the Max Planck Institute for Physics in Munich. His funding as GRC fellow ends with his start at the MPI in Munich.

Siegfried Waldvogel, member of the GRC executive committee, was awarded the Heyrovsky-Price 2018 for his research in the field of molecular electrochemistry. Furthermore, he received the Novartis Chemistry Lectureship Award for his contributions to electrochemistry through particularly sustainable synthesis methods.

The sound artist and GRC fellow **Peter Kiefer** exhibited his installation “looking at gravel” at the international conference Global Composition in Dieburg and is going to show it in Paris next year as well. The installation is composed of sound clips, in which scholars from different research fields were asked to comment on gravel - based on the background of their respective discipline.

Dieter Daniels, professor of art history and media theory at HGB Leipzig and GRC fellow at the Mainz Academy of Fine Arts, organized an international symposium titled “50 Years of Video – From Portapak to Instagram” in October. The participants reflected upon half a century of transdisciplinary, theoretical reflections about video and particularly considered the interaction between theory formation and artistic practice.



Even before becoming a GRC fellow, the artist **Parastou Forouhar** has already attracted attention with her exhibition "Schriftraum" in the apotheke, the exhibition room of the Mainz Academy of Fine Arts in the Mainz city center.







On May 28, the president of JGU awarded the theologians **Adela Yarbro Collins** and **John J. Collins** (both from Yale Divinity School) with the Gutenberg Research Award 2018. Thereby, the GRC and the JGU honored the excellent research and excellent worldwide reputation of the award winners in theology and history of religion. Both are well-known for their contributions to the research of history and literature of early Judaism and Christendom with John J. Collins focusing on the Old Testament and Adela Yarbro Collins concentrating primarily on the New Testament. During the annual celebration four new GRC fellows were welcomed: the church historian

Claus Arnold and the art historian **Elisabeth Oy-Marra** are supported by a "Zielgerade"-Fellowship in order to finalize important book publications. The molecular biologist **Peter Baumann** from Howard Hughes Medical Institute in Kansas City as well as the biophysical chemist **Edward A. Lemke** from the European Molecular Biology Laboratory (EMBL) in Heidelberg were appointed as new professors at JGU.

On May 6, 2019, the next GRC annual celebration will take place at the Mainz School of Music. The GRC will grant the Gutenberg Research Award 2019 to the French historian **Corine Defrance**.

Round Table in collaboration with the Gutenberg Academy for Young Researchers

As every year, the GRC organized a Round Table in cooperation with the Gutenberg Academy. On June 18, **Stefan Kramer** (Professor of Computer Science at JGU) and **Sascha Dickel** (Junior Professor of Media Sociology at JGU) held keynote speeches in order to start the discussion on the topic: "How does Big Data change science?".

GRC "Gewölbegespräche"

GRC fellows presented their current research to an interested audience and discussed about it with guests from different scientific areas in several GRC "Gewölbegesprächen". The theologian and church historian **Claus Arnold** illustrated his research about the antimodernism of the Catholic Church and its link to political authoritarianism in the first half of the 20th century with impressions from the Pontificate of Pope Pius X. The art historian **Elisabeth Oy-Marra** demonstrated her reflections about artistic research in the 17th century based on the Roman painter Pietro Sante Bartoli. **Peter Baumann**, **Edward Lemke** and **Marion Silies** presented different areas of current life science research including telomeres, the dark proteome, and the nervous system of the fruit fly drosophila.



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Design: Inka Meyer,
www.designee.de und Tanja Labs,
www.artefont.de

Photography: private resp.

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April 2019

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