

RELIGION
AND POLITICS.
DYNAMICS
OF TRADITION
AND INNOVATION
RELIGION
UND POLITIK.
DYNAMIKEN
VON TRADITION
UND INNOVATION

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1 General information

Title: Religion und Politik. Dynamiken von Tradition und Innovation/ Religion and Politics. Dynamics of Tradition and Innovation

Summary of the proposal in German and English

Zu Beginn des neuen Jahrtausends erleben wir weltweit tiefgreifende Umbruchprozesse, die selbst die vertrautesten ‚westlichen‘ Selbstverständlichkeiten erschüttern. Dass Religion in diesen komplexen Transformationsprozessen eine zentrale Rolle spielt, ist offenkundig. Umso umstrittener aber ist, worin ihre Rolle eigentlich besteht. Ist sie ein genuiner Konfliktfaktor oder lediglich ein symbolisches Medium für die Austragung sozialer Konflikte oder gar nur ein Instrument für die Verfolgung ganz anderer, etwa politischer und ökonomischer Interessen? Angesichts dieser unübersichtlichen Lage ist es mehr denn je erforderlich, vereinfachende Ursachenzuschreibungen zu vermeiden und mit analytischer Distanz und historisch geschärftem Blick die gegenwärtigen sozialen Konflikte zu untersuchen.

Dieser Aufgabe widmet sich der Exzellenzcluster ‚Religion und Politik‘ seit seiner Etablierung vor zehn Jahren, und zwar in interdisziplinärer Kooperation zwischen Sozial-, Geschichts-, Rechts-, Religions- und Literaturwissenschaftler(innen), Philosoph(innen) und Theolog(innen). Das inhaltliche Spektrum reicht von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart, von Judentum, Christentum und Islam bis zu modernen Formen der Esoterik. Doch setzen wir uns nun einen neuen thematischen Schwerpunkt. Stand bisher die Beschäftigung mit den Austausch- und Abgrenzungsprozessen zwischen Religion und Politik im Zentrum des Interesses, so fokussieren wir die Analyse nun auf die Frage, *auf welche Weise Religion gesellschaftliche und politische Auseinandersetzungen stimulieren, eindämmen und modifizieren kann, worin ihre dynamische Potenz begründet liegt und welche externen Bedingungen ihre Mobilisierungsfähigkeit begünstigen bzw. einschränken*. Im Unterschied zu säkularisierungstheoretischen Annahmen wird damit die Aufmerksamkeit auf die *aktive Rolle von Religion* in den politischen und sozialen Auseinandersetzungen in Geschichte und Gegenwart gelenkt. Um die politische Dynamik von Religion in der ihr eigenen Gleichzeitigkeit von *Tradition und Innovation* erfassen zu können, konzentrieren wir uns darauf, unterschiedliche strukturelle, semantische und handlungspraktische Spannungsverhältnisse herauszuarbeiten: Spannungen zwischen (1) transkultureller Verflechtung und Entflechtung, (2) religiöser Vielfalt und rechtlich-politischer Einheit und (3) Religionskritik und Religionsapologie. Dabei analysieren wir diese Spannungsverhältnisse vor allem unter fünf theoretischen Beobachtungsperspektiven: mit Hilfe von Theorien (A) der Medialität, (B) der Differenzierung, (C) der Ungleichheit, (D) des Konflikts und (E) der Emotionalität.

Langfristiges Ziel ist es, Münster zum führenden Zentrum interdisziplinärer Religionsforschung in Europa zu machen. Schon jetzt kann der Cluster in seiner Arbeit auf eine Reihe nachhaltiger

Strukturveränderungen an der WWU aufbauen. Hinzu wird ein „Campus der Religionen“ kommen, der die interdisziplinäre Kooperation stärken und die interreligiöse Verständigung befördern wird.

At the beginning of the new millennium, we are experiencing profound processes of upheaval across the world that are shattering even the most familiar “Western” axioms. It goes without saying that religion is playing a central role in these complex processes of transformation. But what is highly contested is the precise nature of this role. Is religion a genuine factor of conflict or merely a symbolic medium for the playing out of social conflicts, or even just an instrument for the pursuit of quite different (for example, political and economic) interests? Given this complexity, it is more necessary than ever to avoid simplistic causal explanations and to investigate the social conflicts of today from a perspective that has analytical distance from the object of study and is sharpened by historical research.

This is the task to which the Cluster of Excellence “Religion and Politics” has dedicated itself since its founding ten years ago, and it has done so in interdisciplinary cooperation between scholars in the social sciences, history, law, religion, and literature, as well as philosophy and theology. The spectrum dealt with by the Cluster ranges from antiquity to the present, from Judaism, Christianity and Islam to modern forms of esotericism. But we now wish to take on the challenge of a new thematic focus. While so far our focus has been mainly on processes of exchange and demarcation between religion and politics, we now wish to turn our attention to the question of *how religion can stimulate, curb and modify social and political conflicts, where its dynamic power lies, and which external conditions facilitate or restrict its capacity to mobilize people*. Running counter to the claims of secularization theory, then, we will focus our attention on the *active role of religion* in the political and social conflicts of the past and present. In order to grasp the political and social dynamics of religion in its own simultaneity of *tradition and innovation*, we will map out different structural, semantic and practical tensions: between (1) transcultural entanglement and disentanglement, (2) religious diversity and legal-political unity, and (3) criticism of religion and apologetics. In doing so, we will analyze these tensions from five main theoretical perspectives: those of (A) mediality, (B) differentiation, (C) inequality, (D) conflict, and (E) emotionality.

Our long-term goal is to make Münster the leading centre for interdisciplinary research on religion in Germany and Europe. The Cluster can already build on a number of sustainable structural changes at the University of Münster. In addition, a “Campus of Religions” is being established, which, by bringing old and new institutional structures together in the same space, will strengthen interdisciplinary cooperation and promote interreligious understanding.

Applicant university

Applicant university	Location
Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität (WWU)	Münster

Spokespersons: Prof. Dr. Detlef Pollack, Prof. Dr. Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger

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National and international cooperation partners

Institutions as cooperation partners (selection)	Ort
Berlin Social Science Center (WZB)*	Berlin/ Germany
Research project Corpus Coranicum, Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities*	Berlin/ Germany
Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin	Berlin/ Germany
Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient	Berlin/ Deutschland
Centre for Religion, Economy and Politics (ZRWP)*	Basel, Fribourg, Lausanne, Luzern and Zurich/ Switzerland
Institute for Advanced Studies, Central European University (CEU)*	Budapest/ Hungary
Pew Research Center	Washington, D.C./ USA
Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs	Washington, D.C./ USA
Hebrew Bible Department, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem*	Jerusalem/ Israel
Al-Azhar University	Cairo/ Egypt
London School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London	London/ UK
Mandel Scholion Interdisciplinary Research Center in the Humanities and Jewish Studies, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem	Jerusalem/ Israel
Department of Archaeology, Conservation and History, University of Oslo	Oslo/ Norway
Department of Classics, Princeton University	Princeton/ USA
Faculté des Lettres et des Sciences Humaines, Université Mohammed Premier	Oujda/ Morocco

* Participating institutions that will receive funding (≥ 90.000 Euro per institution) from the budget of the Cluster of Excellence.

Regional cooperation partners

Institutions as cooperation partners in the region	Ort
Center for Religious Studies (CERES)*	Bochum
Centre for Turkish Studies and Integration Research (ZfTI)*	Essen
Comenius Institute (CI)	Münster
Individual cooperation partners in the region	Ort
Prof. Dr. Matthias Kortmann, Junior Professor of „Religion and Politics“, TU Dortmund University*	Dortmund

* Participating institutions that will receive funding (≥ 90.000 Euro per institution) from the budget of the Cluster of Excellence.

2 Objectives of the Cluster of Excellence

Research goals

- 1) **The fundamental research goal of the Cluster** is to make a significant contribution to international research on religion through studying across disciplines, epochs and cultures

the changing relationship between religion and politics from the pre-Christian antiquity to the present day. To do so, the Cluster will focus on the three monotheistic religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam (including the forms of religiosity and spirituality associated with them), and on the polytheistic prehistory of each. In terms of region, our focus will be on Europe and the Mediterranean, and on areas outside Europe with which they have been or are intertwined.

- 2) New research question.** Our new thematic focus is the dynamic power of religion. In contrast to the existing Cluster of Excellence, we will in the future focus more on the role of religion as a driving force behind political and social change, and bring to the fore the dynamics of tradition and innovation peculiar to religion. In doing so, we seek to forge an even closer link between hermeneutic and explanatory approaches.
- 3) Strengthening the perspective from within religion.** We set ourselves the goal of increasing our sensitivity towards how each different religious community understands itself. On the one hand, this is achieved through the exchange between (non-denominational) research on religion and (denominational) theologies. On the other, we are committed to promoting interreligious dialogue. These two concerns will be served by the creation of a “Campus of Religions”, where the theologies established at the University of Münster (Protestant, Catholic, Christian Orthodox, Islamic) will be brought together.
- 4) Addressing basic normative questions.** A further important goal of the Cluster is to build a bridge from historical and social analyses to normative questions in the legal and political sciences. The current processes of profound upheaval (caused not least by religion) have called into question fundamental assumptions concerning the functional and normative principles of modern societies long held to be incontestable. As a result, there is now a heightened socio-political need to reflect on the normative foundations of the social order and the public space that should be granted to religion.

Structural goals

- 5) Flexible research structures.** We wish to create an open culture to facilitate scholarship and research. Such a culture will strengthen existing research structures, while also enabling us to develop new research areas and create uncertain and even risky research perspectives. This will be served by a range of flexible funding instruments and forms of cooperation (including transient “Research Clouds”, seed money, international partnerships, fellowship programmes, and the Centre for Digital Humanities).
- 6) Raising international visibility.** Fostering existing contacts and strengthening high-level international partnerships will intensify networking between countries and improve the international dissemination of our findings.
- 7) Supporting young academics.** One of our central concerns is to support young academics. This will be achieved, for example, through the creation of a new MA programme in

“Religion and Politics” with a strong emphasis on research-based teaching (graduate level), through structured doctoral training in the integrated Graduate School (postgraduate level), and through the establishment of autonomous and independent postdoc positions (postdoctoral level).

- 8) Research communication and knowledge transfer.** We take seriously our social obligation to make our research findings available to the wider public. Our goal is not least to provide transferable knowledge for political action. We also do this by setting new interdisciplinary and disciplinary priorities (migration research, educational research, research on Eastern Europe), which pick up on emerging challenges in research on religion.
- 9) Promoting social diversity.** Our research area has a particular sensitizing effect when it comes to dealing with social diversity in a fair manner. Promoting equal opportunities for people in terms not only of gender, but also origin, ethnicity, religious affiliation, etc. is therefore an essential concern of the Cluster.
- 10) Consolidating research on religion at the University of Münster.** The goals listed above converge into an overall long-term strategy. Our long-term goal is to consolidate research on religion at the University of Münster by establishing a university institute for interdisciplinary research on religion. This institute will maintain national and international relationships of cooperation and link research on religion in North Rhine-Westphalia. We therefore wish to make Münster the leading centre for interdisciplinary research on religion in Germany and Europe.

3 Research Programme

3.1 Research objectives, research approach and positioning within the research area

Introduction

On 9 October 1989, 70,000 people gathered on the streets of Leipzig to demonstrate peacefully against the East German SED regime. They carried no placards or banners. What they had to oppose the military might of the regime was instead the mere presence of their bodies. The procession of the demonstrators began immediately after the end of the prayer for peace, when the worshippers who had gathered in St Nikolai Church and other churches in the city centre poured out of the churches. Their movement continued in the tentative march of tens of thousands of people, which encircled the inner city ring within an hour. From then on, hundreds of thousands of people met every week for months for the so-called Monday demonstration – until the communist system collapsed.

The mass protest that shook the GDR emanated without doubt from the churches; also without doubt is that the protest was peaceful. Some even described the upheaval in the GDR as a “Protestant Revolution” (Neubert 1990). But did other factors not have a more decisive role in ending communism? The severe economic conditions caused by the system, Gorbachev’s

abandonment of the Brezhnev doctrine, the wave of refugees pouring out over Austria/Hungary? The Protestant churches in the GDR had for decades offered a shelter for freedom of speech, and had repeatedly called for the state to engage in dialogue with its citizens. In the transition to democracy, the churches once again played an important role as mediator. But can we really claim that it was their dynamics that led to the upheaval? Was the peacefulness of the demonstrators faced with the military might of the police not simply a dictate of reason, and therefore not due, as is sometimes claimed, to the Protestant spirit of the “Candle Revolution” (as it was also called)?

However we determine the function of the churches in the peaceful revolution, their involvement in the political upheavals of 1989 was anything but coincidental. Religious actors often assumed a central role in the processes of democratization that took place across the world in the decades between 1970 and 2010. Researchers have calculated that, in the 78 countries undergoing substantial democratization between 1972 and 2009, religious actors played either a supporting or a leading role in 48 cases (Toft/Philpot/Shah 2011: 92f.). Not only Christian, but also Hindu, Buddhist and Muslim actors took up pro-democracy positions, with those from the Catholic spectrum being represented disproportionately often. Political scientists such as Samuel P Huntington (1991: 76) have therefore even described the wave of democratization as “overwhelmingly a Catholic wave” – a not inconsiderable claim given that the Roman episcopacy had in the 19th and 20th century, and up until the Second Vatican Council, rejected democracy, modernism and liberalism as anti-Catholic (Hellemans 2001: 117-119).

However, these researchers pointing to the democratizing influence of religious actors have also observed that religious communities and movements have often hampered processes of democratization, too (Toft/Philpot/Shah 2011: 108f.), with the most diverse religious groups, Muslim as well as Christian Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant, and Buddhist, being involved in these anti-democratic currents.

The multifaceted and ambivalent role that religion can play in politics seems typical. Whether we think of the xenophobic nationalism of the Russian Orthodox Church and its willingness to support the authoritarian politics of the Kremlin; of the worldwide commitment of Christian groupings and movements to realizing ambitious climate policy goals; of the belief of American evangelical groups that the USA has a mission of freedom in the world; of the conviction held by orthodox Jews that they are building a democratic state on the promised land; of the Islamization of society as a whole in Turkey in the name of prosperity, progress and democracy; of the appeal made by renowned philosophers to the meaning-giving potential of religion as a rationale for human dignity; of the public debates in all European countries on the visibility of religious symbols from the burqa to the minaret; or of the almost daily acts of terrorism carried out throughout the world in the name of Allah – what is remarkable in all these cases is not only how closely religion is intertwined with politics and the potency that religion can gain by

being politicized, but also how diverse its political role can be in each case. How religion is tied up with the political conflicts of the world, how it can incite these conflicts through its diffusion with national, economic and social interests, but also how it is able to have a moderating influence on its followers by appealing to the will of God – all of these questions are of great scholarly, as well as social and political, relevance.

3.1.1 Our new research focus

Investigating the historically changing relationship between religion and politics, and the political role of religion in the conflicts of the world, is an intellectual challenge that has occupied us for the last few years. But we wish now to focus on the question of *why religion can exert such a political influence at all, and which social dynamics lie behind its political power*. This question undoubtedly poses an even greater intellectual challenge, and is a question whose fascination is capable of driving our work over the next few years.

Religion has throughout history always exercised political power in different ways. In premodern societies, it served to give ideological legitimacy to political rule, represented a source of motivation for political rebellion, was the cause of armed conflicts, source of peace agreements, reason for the aggressive disempowerment of the other, a vision of a world without violence, and source of ideas for exclusive theocracies. What is astounding, and this is something that many did not expect, is that religion can still perform these and similar functions today, or can perform them once again. Secularization theories had for decades claimed that the importance of religion was declining, that the gap between religion and politics was increasing, and that religion was becoming ever more privatized (Luckmann 1967; Wilson 1982; Dobbelaere 2002). Under the influence of such theories, interest in the issue of religion also dwindled in the historical and social sciences. In recent years, however, more and more researchers on religion have observed an opposite tendency: namely, the deprivatization of religion and its renaissance in society (Casanova 1994; Riesebrodt 2000). Religion is, to adapt Peter L Berger's well-known dictum a little (Berger 1999: 2), as furiously political today as it ever was, and in some places more so than ever. Indeed, it is not simply a traditional entity that reacts to social change; rather, it is itself capable of self-renewal, of adapting smoothly to changing circumstances, of innovation, of exercising influence on politics, law and the economy, and is therefore also able to stimulate social change. Religious communities are always concerned of course with preserving their traditions and defending them through acts of self-preservation that distinguish them from other traditions. But what they claim as their tradition must always be reinterpreted and thereby modified in the process of self-perpetuation. It may therefore be argued, seemingly paradoxically, that religion renews itself precisely in the act of drawing on its tradition.

At the same time, the politicization of religion in contemporary societies seems often to go hand in hand with the loosening of its anchorage in society. The case of the GDR outlined above is just one example among many. The churches and their groups campaigning around issues related to the environment, peace and justice played an important role in the GDR in the transition to democracy, although the number of active church members during the final phase of the GDR only constituted a dwindling minority. The social relevance of the churches has in parts fallen dramatically throughout Western Europe, if we think, say, of the Netherlands, France, Great Britain, or of once highly Catholic countries such as Spain and Ireland, but it is also the case in parts of Eastern Europe, in Canada, Australia, and New Zealand (Bruce 2002; Norris/Inglehart 2012). Even the USA, which is much cited as a contrasting case, as well as Japan and South Korea, have now also been affected by processes of secularization (Voas/Chaves 2016; Reader 2012; Pollack/Rosta 2017). The question of how to explain the political power of religion has thus become more critical than ever given these clear tendencies of secularization, which seem to characterize not only much of Europe, but also various non-European regions.

In order to understand how religion can gain political influence, we must include in our research the question of how its anchoring in society has changed. Only by considering the changing relationship between religion and society can we analyze more sharply the political power of religion. If religion still possessed in the premodern period a power in society that enabled it to penetrate all areas of human life, from the founding of norms regulating human coexistence, through the interpretation of the world, and up to the hidden impulses of conscience, it now tends to be marginalized both socially and individually in many parts of the world. We can only understand and explain the current political power emanating from religion by also taking into account the way that its importance in society has changed.

But this means that we have to analyze the political role of religion in earlier epochs, too. The ambivalence of the political effects that religion has is after all not a new phenomenon. Religion also had the potential in premodern societies both to limit political power and to expand it greatly, both to restrict the use of violence as well as to strengthen it, both to promote solidarity and the willingness to cooperate by appealing to the compassion of God, and to work in the opposite direction by employing categorizations of “good” and “evil”, of “true believers” and “unbelievers”. Investigating the effect that religions have in politics and society therefore requires an analysis that has historical depth and spans epochs; only such a broad approach will allow us to grasp the particular historical specificity of the ambivalence inherent to religions.

3.1.2 The new focus in relation to the work already carried out in earlier Cluster phases

The starting-point for the first Cluster application in 2006 was the observation new at the time that religion was returning to the political agenda. Of primary interest during the first Cluster

phase was therefore how far this observation was compatible with the traditional meta-narratives of modernization and secularization, and how far the familiar grand theories on the relationship between religion and modernity would have to be rewritten. We are still concerned today with reflecting critically on models of long-term historical processes, and we will continue to reflect in the future on the long-term changes and deep dynamics in the field of “religion and politics” and “religion and modernization”.

In the second Cluster phase, we have focused our attention more specifically on the processes of interaction and demarcation between religion and politics. We have explored in many research projects where the boundaries between the fields of the religious and the political are drawn, how they are shifted, attacked, maintained, rebalanced, or even demolished. To do so, we have adopted a perspective that was both interdisciplinary and cross-epochal; this perspective has proven extremely fruitful, and we therefore wish also to adopt it in our future work. What different political functions religion performs in historical change, how religion can define, symbolically charge and escalate political conflicts, but also delegitimize, limit, redefine and deescalate them, what is thereby in each case assumed to be religious, and what is treated as political, how religious and political actors relate to each other, how they use religion to further political interests, and how they resist the use of religion – these questions will continue to occupy us in the future, too.

But, if we wish to understand the political and social role of religion, then it is not enough to analyze the processes by which it blends with political and social interests and identities, or by which it differs from them. It is also not enough to recognize now the enduring importance of religion and then switch without further ado from theories of secularization to those of sacralization, since the politicization of religion can go hand in hand with processes of secularization. As important as describing the forms of demarcation of religion from politics, or its blending with political interests, may be for gauging the shifting interplay between religion and politics, it is also necessary to supplement the descriptive approach with one that is explanatory. Analyzing the interplay between religion and politics almost forces us to investigate the driving forces behind this interplay, the contextual conditions that facilitate or inhibit it, and the momentum for social and political change that emanates from religion itself. We will therefore focus our future work on investigating *how religion can stimulate, curb and modify social and political conflicts, where its dynamic power lies, and which external conditions facilitate or restrict its capacity to mobilize people*. Reflecting critically on the assumptions of secularization theory, we will therefore turn our attention to the active role of religion in the political and social conflicts of the past and present, and at the same time also consider the limits to those religious dynamics and the extent of their dependency on contextual conditions.

Framework in terms of object of study, and geographical and historical scope. In terms of our object of study, we will focus on the three monotheistic religions of Judaism, Christianity

and Islam, including related forms of spirituality, esotericism and magic. Our geographical focus is Europe, the Mediterranean and its neighbouring areas, and areas outside Europe with which they have been, or are, intertwined. We will also include in our work the prehistory of Christianity, of Islam and of Judaism, as well as the cultural context in each case, since it is this prehistory that provided so to speak the “soil” from which the three monotheistic religions grew, and that influenced them over the centuries in both a latent and a manifest manner. We concentrate on Europe and the Mediterranean since this cultural space has particularly dense networks of communication, which are characterized by newly forming interconnections and interactions that recur repeatedly through history, through processes of absorption and transfer, but also of rejection.

Concentrating on these areas by no means implies adopting a Eurocentric perspective, since we also always keep in view global relations – that is, the interactions and acts of transfer between European and non-European cultures (especially the USA, Latin America, North and East Africa, the Middle East/Ancient Near East, but also, albeit less intensively, India and Indonesia). Even dense spaces of communication cannot be treated as independent and homogeneous entities. We are aware of the danger arising from our focus of making Europe and the insights gained there the yardstick of analysis (Conrad/Randeria 2002: 12). The well-known grand narratives of secularization, modernization, rationalization and differentiation succumbed more or less to this danger (see Joas 2017; Smith 2017). By always discussing such grand narratives, we therefore build into our analyses a platform of constant critical self-reflection to help us monitor such constrictions. Focusing on Europe and the Mediterranean does not necessarily lead to a Eurocentric gesture of superiority; rather, we need to distinguish between object of study and normative viewpoint taken.

By focusing on Europe, the Mediterranean and the links that they have outside Europe, we consciously refrain from studying their entanglements with the religiously productive cultures of Asia (which previously provided an important comparative perspective in the work of the Cluster). This shift of focus allows us to gain in coherence when it comes to content. By doing so, we can also concentrate more on the study of the three monotheistic world religions; it is here that the Cluster has a particularly high level of expertise.

Focusing on Europe also requires new thematic priorities. In future, we wish to respond to deficits in national and international research by focusing more on the *role of religion in migration processes*; there is extensive research on this issue in the USA, but less so in Europe. We will also focus in our future work on the *relationship between religion and politics in Eastern Europe from the 19th to the 21st century*. Compared to the situation in the USA, England and Finland, there is not much research on Eastern Europe in Germany focusing on religion, and indeed the situation has become even less satisfactory in recent years. Finally, we wish in the

future to place more emphasis on the *normative approaches of political theory and legal philosophy*.

Analyzing the political dynamics of religion also involves addressing the question of *whether and how far modern constitutional democracies are able to settle peacefully the conflicts arising from growing religious diversity*. Postcolonial scholars have discussed this question over the last few decades, and especially by comparing Europe and India (Chakrabarty 2000; Bhargava 2009, 2012). Building on the debates around the “Theory from the South” (Comaroff/Comaroff 2012a, 2012b; Mbembe 2012), we now also wish to focus on this question, and we will do so through, for example, a comparison of Europe and Africa. Dealing with a different case and with new empirical material will enable us to provide the international discussion on the regulation of religious plurality with new momentum.

3.1.3 Theoretical assumptions and central concepts

Flexible borders. We assume in our analysis of the *relationship between religion and politics* and its historically changing dynamics that religion and politics are not in all cases clearly distinct entities, but rather potentially open social fields with shifting borders that are always contested and renegotiated (Bourdieu/Wacquant 2006). Making such a distinction may already seem to make little sense for some premodern and non-Western cultures. We can think here of ancient Egypt with its cult of the sacred kingdom, where ideas of God and the Pharaoh flowed into one another; and also of ancient China with its cult of the state, where the emperor also represented the divine ruler.

But distinguishing between religion and politics does make sense to denote the primary poles of social conflict when it comes to the complex and text-based religions of the Ancient Near East (which were once described as “high religions”), the period of Greek and Roman antiquity, Christianity from its origins to the present, Islam, and Judaism – that is, when it comes to those religious traditions that we focus on here. All these traditions saw the emergence of religious and political roles and institutions that not only differed from each other, but also often even competed with one another. While, for example, there were ideas in ancient Judaism of an original unity of royal and priestly functions with its remembrance of King David or with the mythical figure of Melchizedek, who was both king and priest, such ideas were nonetheless excluded after the loss of statehood. Also in Islam, religious and secular institutions increasingly grew apart, and they did so only a century after Muhammad, who had still united in his person the office of ruler, prophet and priest; from the classical period onwards, sultan and religious scholars constituted the key secular and spiritual figures of Muslim societies (Lapidus 1988: 183f.). Finally, in Christianity, the relationship between *sacerdotium* and *regnum*, between spiritual and secular power, was, despite many alliances, riven for centuries with tensions and sometimes even violent conflicts.

Thus, what was understood as religion and what as politics has varied greatly in the history of the different traditions, and has also often overlapped in many respects. Religion and politics should therefore *not be essentialized*. Even if they are useful as analytical categories, we can repeatedly observe that the borderlines between them are not only shifted, but often also transgressed and dissolved.

Contextualization. In order to avoid essentializing religion and politics as clearly distinguishable entities, we need to see them always in the *context of social conflicts, opposing interests, constellations of actors, and processes of negotiation and demarcation*. Even where religious identities, discourses and practices present themselves as being in opposition to their environment and claim to be irreducible and superior, or detached from “normal” life, they still participate in what they seek to emancipate themselves from. This holds true even for phenomena such as Islamic fundamentalism, whose antimodern stance has its discursive framework in Western modernity (Eisenstadt 2000: 20). We cannot therefore analyze religious forms of meaning and social forms of religion in isolation, but must always understand them as components of social and political conflicts, as providing a platform to articulate conflicting interests, claims and affiliations. Religious symbols are characterized by a high degree of plasticity; they are open to interpretation and ambivalent in meaning (Graf 2013: 12). Their plasticity makes religion compatible in many different ways with non-religious semantics and practices, and allow it to be employed in social conflicts, with religion thereby deploying its dynamic power in different, and even opposing, ways. It can bring about peace, encourage people to love their neighbour (and even their enemy), and play a significant role in abating conflicts; it can also create hostility, fuel social tensions, strengthen fanaticism, and reinforce resentment between divided parties. Christian ideas of repentance and forgiveness were thus able from the late antiquity to modern times to foster forms by which conflicts could be resolved amicably; but the Christian legitimacy of using violence was also able to lower the threshold when it came to killing people who belonged to other faiths. In turn, the Quran calls for infidels to be killed, while also issuing commandments to tolerate those of other faiths. A central concern of the Cluster will therefore be to investigate under which social, political and legal conditions religious traditions tend to have an empowering and liberalizing effect, and under which conditions, a more repressive and conflictual effect.

Intrinsicness. On the other hand, though, religion cannot only be explained in terms of its social contingency and its involvement in social and political contexts. Rather, it possesses an *intrinsicness (Eigensinn)* arising from its tradition and history, from its semantics, rituals and forms of community. This intrinsicness explains why religion can become an independent factor in social change and political conflicts. If we wish to understand the interplay between religious identities, hopes of salvation and notions of order, as well as religious discourses and practices on the one hand, and non-religious interests on the other, then we also have to take

religion seriously as a *resource with its own dynamics*, as a phenomenon that has its own rules, systems of logic and modes of attributing meaning, and that can therefore initiate, shape, or also hinder social change. It is therefore necessary to focus not only on religion's external relationships of entanglement, but also on the entanglements *internal* to religion: connections, transfers, translations, reinterpretations, as well as rejections and exclusions.

Systemic relations. We will therefore always consider three different systemic relations in their mutual entanglements: those internal to religion (*intrareligious* dimension), those between different religious communities and religious traditions (*interreligious* dimension), and those between religious and non-religious actors, roles, movements and organizations (*extrareligious* dimension). Besides the contextual dependence of religion, we will therefore be concerned centrally also with how religion itself can become a factor that transforms society, and influence social and political developments (*extrareligious* dimension); which dynamics arise from the relationship between different religious communities (*interreligious* dimension); and how religious communities can renew themselves, and learn and become self-reflexive (*intrareligious* dimension).

Problems of definition. The work of the Cluster has shown the usefulness of adopting a broad concept of *religion*. Heuristically, a broader concept is more fruitful than a narrower one, since it allows us also to consider functional equivalents of religion, metaphorical uses of the term, as well as forms of secular sacralization, such as the religious interpretation of human rights and the sacralization of the nation. A broader concept of religion is also better suited to avoiding the widespread tendency to focus on the "high religions" and to see religious phenomena ultimately through the lens of Christianity. Constructivist approaches criticize the Christian and Western bias inherent in the concept of religion. They see it less as a category to denote objects to be grasped empirically, and more as a discourse category that contains power relations and everyday ideas of what constitutes normality. As such, it should be critically deconstructed to reveal its ideological implications (Asad 1993: 27-53; McCutcheon 1997; Fitzgerald 2000; Dubuisson 2003; Masuzawa 2005). However, knowing that the concept of religion is of European provenance does not usually encourage historians and sociologists of religion to refrain from using the concept (see, for example, Chidester 1996: 259; Bergunder 2011: 5). It is a fundamental concept in research on religion, and indispensable for staking out the terrain occupied by its object of study (Rüpke 2007: 31f.). And with good reason, since, although the term "religion" may well tend to be modern and European, the phenomena that it denotes are not. Although it is important not to overestimate the importance of definitions for scholarly endeavour, those working in an interdisciplinary Cluster cannot do without shared definitions, since they allow researchers to communicate about the object of research beyond the borders of their individual academic culture, and therefore to understand each other on a common foundation.

Concept of religion. To have a pragmatic hypothesis with which to work, we classify as *religion* all those phenomena that are characterized by an act of transcending the empirical, intersubjectively accessible lifeworld, while simultaneously relating to that world (Pollack 2016). As far as religious phenomena are characterized by transcending the intersubjectively accessible world, it is necessary for research on religion to include in its analysis religious self-understanding, which does not mean that it then becomes dependent on such self-understanding. In turn, relating to the everyday world in the act of transcending makes the religious forms of meaning communicable. Religions are therefore socially anchored symbolic systems and practices that mediate between immanence and transcendence, while at the same time deliberately exceeding the accessible world. It is in its potential for transcending that the peculiar ability of religions resides – the ability to enter into a reflexive relationship with the accessible world, to provide its norms with new values, and to modify and even to reverse them, and thus make the social world dynamic.

Concept of politics. We also take an open approach when it comes to defining *politics*. We understand by *political* not only all those features of human action that are related to creating collectively binding decisions affecting the common good (Weber 2005 [1922]: 38). Binding decisions need to be justified, and they are dependent on social acceptance. The area of politics therefore also includes those social practices that, for example, place demands on binding decisions, or that are intended to prepare and ultimately legitimize them, as well as all the processes that affect the implementation and recognition of binding decisions – that is, it also includes the relationship between political processes and structures, and political culture (see Almond/Powell 1978; Easton 1975; Merkel 1999).

Levels and dimensions of the social. Religious and political change occurs at different social levels. We can distinguish between changes at the *macro level* of entire societies; at the *meso level* of organizations, institutions, communities and social movements; and at the *micro level* of individuals and individual relationships. In addition, religious and political change takes place in different social dimensions, such dimensions being *semantics*, *social structure* and *practice* (Joas 1992). It is essential always to consider the level and the dimension which research relates to. Descriptions and explanations that do focus on one dimension or level must always also keep an eye on the others, and consider how the different levels and dimensions relate to each other.

Dynamics of tradition and innovation. *Tradition* and *innovation* denote different modes of historical change. The history of religion is full of charismatic upheavals, new spiritual beginnings, innovative schisms and reformations – which are something new, even if they see themselves as simply returning to origins. At the same time, religions are often portrayed as traditional, as bolstering the old in the face of dynamic changes in the environment. A recent international study, for example, concludes that religions hinder scholarly and technical innovations

(Bénabou *et al.*, 2013). But traditions always in fact also hold the potential for renewal, since preserving something means actualizing past forms of meaning by translating them into the present. Thus, the traditional forms of meaning are never simply preserved; rather, they are necessarily modified and enriched with new intentions, as they are placed into the changed present. Traditions are resources that always contain more than is actually drawn upon, but from which only what is specifically actualized gains relevance. Tradition is therefore always a creation in retrospect (Osterhammel 2016: 642), but also something that depends on the inexhaustible pool of the past.

Tradition and innovation are intricately meshed. But we must nevertheless distinguish them. *Innovation* may be deliberate. Then what is introduced as new intentionally sets itself apart from the past. In a sense, it is only the new that creates the past in the first place; at the same time, it always remains negatively attached to the past. But innovation can also be unintentional, with the new being in this case only recognized as such in retrospect. *Traditions*, in contrast, are cultivated by religious communities; they are often defended against innovations, and are used as a point of differentiation from the new. They are characterized by a certain social tenacity, but can nevertheless only be preserved by being constantly recreated. The relationship between tradition and innovation therefore inhabits a dialectical dynamic that neither side can bring to rest.

We can distinguish between religious communities in terms of how they deal with this dialectical relationship between tradition and innovation. There is in the Catholic Church, for example, the notion of the immutability of the one true doctrine. Significant innovations, such as those brought about by the Council of Trent or the Second Vatican Council, had to be presented again and again as a continuation of tradition or as its rediscovery; in no case could they be declared as a break in tradition. Other religious communities, however, came together in radical protest against the religious mainstream, and emphasized less the continuities with which they were nevertheless connected than the discontinuities – we can think here of the Anabaptists, the spiritualist groups, and the antitrinitarians that emerged during the Protestant Reformation, but also of the Shiites in Islam. Protestantism, in turn, tried with the dictum of *ecclesia semper reformanda* to institutionalize its capacity for reform, and to combine continuity with change. Even the Protestants of the 16th century legitimized their religious innovations – which, though unintended, led to the emergence of entirely new religious institutions – by drawing on traditional sources, and replaced the authority of pope and councils with the authority of Holy Scripture. While some may mistake or even conceal the radical nature of their innovation, others may obscure the lines of continuity and emphasize the innovation, while others still may combine innovation and tradition.

The future work of the Cluster will be concerned with investigating the productive power of religion in the double tension between *tradition and innovation*, and between *intrinsicness and*

contextuality. In doing so, we intend to work out the driving forces, forms of logic and typical patterns of change in the relationship between *religion and politics*, and thus to identify characteristic *dynamics of tradition and innovation*.

3.1.4 Interdisciplinary cooperation and methodological variety

Added value of interdisciplinary cooperation. To achieve this research goal, we need to work together in an interdisciplinary manner. A subject as complex as religion, with its deep historical roots and its manifold links to other areas of life, can only be studied fruitfully if such research is designed in an interdisciplinary way and thus includes different disciplinary perspectives. Interdisciplinary cooperation is particularly important when, as in our research programme, the focus is on the productive dynamics that religious communities unfold not only within their traditions (*intrareligious*) and not only in relation to other religious communities (*interreligious*), but also beyond the religious field (*extrareligious*). If we wish to understand the effects of religion on politics, law, the economy, literature and art, and the contextual background of religion, then it is essential for different disciplines to cooperate with one another. Different disciplines approach the object of study with different questions in mind, use a broad range of theories and methods, argue at both the macro and the micro level, and analyze the object of study both from within its own perspective (such as in the theologies), as well as from the outside (such as in the social, political, legal, economic, aesthetic, literary, historical and religious sciences). The added value that comes from interdisciplinary cooperation in a Cluster therefore applies in a particularly strong way to the research programme pursued here.

It is important in this cooperation for researchers to adopt the perspective of an unfamiliar discipline, to open themselves up to new questions, and to learn in terms of both theories and methods on the one hand, and empirical facts on the other. Crossing disciplinary borders will only be fruitful, however, if researchers do not abandon the disciplinary foundations of their research, the exchange with representatives of their own discipline, and the orientation towards its specific standards. Here, the intensive cooperation of researchers from different disciplines also forces us to reflect constantly on the theoretical and methodological foundations of our research, thereby leading in a steady circle both to the sharpening of disciplinary work and to a deepened interdisciplinary understanding. In this way, established, self-evident facts in a discipline can be questioned, while at the same time interdisciplinary perspectives monitored from a disciplinary point of view. Productive uncertainty is a not insignificant by-product of interdisciplinary work. The self-reflexive distance thereby gained is at the same time an important prerequisite for the successful transfer of knowledge into social and political practice that we intend.

Understanding and explaining. The disciplinary composition of the Cluster poses a particular challenge, but also opens up special opportunities for research. This applies first of all to the

linking of methods of understanding with methods of explaining, which Max Weber identified as a methodological ideal. Hermeneutic methods of historical research are particularly important when it comes to capturing and interpreting the semantic content of religious symbols, practices, and discourses. At the same time, they are an indispensable prerequisite for explaining the political dynamics of religion that the future work of the Cluster will focus upon. Thus, the interplay between methods of understanding and methods of explaining, methods that can complement and productively challenge each other, will be very important in the work of the Cluster. Cultural-historical research that goes back to the early-modern period, the Middle Ages and antiquity adds a historical depth to the analyses of the social sciences, which are more oriented to the present. Not only does such historical research provide comparative points of view; it is also able to show path dependencies, long-term transformations, continuities and discontinuities, all of which have had a profound effect on the current situation. Conversely, cultural-historical research can also benefit from what the social sciences have to offer in terms of theory, sophisticated methodological tools, work on terminology, and sharply defined research designs.

Denominational and non-denominational research. Mutual linking and interlocking will also characterize the relationship between internal and external perspectives. Observing religious phenomena from the outside is a necessary step to piercing the veil of religious practices and ideas that are anchored in the lifeworld. The external view enables us to understand and explain religious activity and experience, religious semantics and social forms, on the basis of their context, and also to include circumstances, opportunity structures and framework conditions that lie behind religious actors and that these religious actors themselves either cannot, or do not want to, see. The external and distanced approach to religion runs the risk, however, of ignoring how religious actors understand themselves. This is a risk because the dynamic potential of religion often lies precisely within religion itself, in its relation to transcendence, the will of God, the sacred laws of forefathers, or the prophetic call to repentance. In order to grasp this potential, we must also take into account the worlds of imagination, patterns of interpretation, the discourses and motives of religious actors. It is therefore necessary to balance religious self-understanding with a perception external to religion, and to place them in a relationship where they can feed into each other, complement one another, and be critical of the other. Such an approach takes account of religious identities, practices, beliefs, and theological arguments when it comes to explaining the political dynamics of religion, while at the same time always linking them to contextual analyses.

Empirical and normative approaches. The Cluster combines the work of historically and empirically oriented disciplines with disciplines that follow a normative agenda, such as theology, philosophy, jurisprudence, and political theory. These two groups are in a relationship of productive tension and mutual complementation. Normative approaches build on historical and

empirical work, but also go beyond describing and explaining empirical facts. They suggest best practices, good social arrangements and ethical orientations, and make recommendations for political, religious and social practice – something that other disciplines usually refrain from doing. Dealing with the political dynamics emanating from religion cannot avoid addressing the challenges that religious pluralism poses to the modern constitutional states of today. Doing so inevitably raises the question of whether and how far modern constitutional democracies are in a position to deal adequately with the conflicts resulting from the growing diversity of religious traditions and their demand to see respect extended to their religious beliefs.

Methodological diversity. The involvement of different disciplines and differing perspectives results in the broad spectrum of methodological approaches that we use to deal with our object of study. Besides hermeneutic methods of historical-critical research, we use explanatory approaches of the social sciences; besides long-term perspectives from cultural history, ethnological case studies; besides macroscopic comparisons, perspectives that consider the history of transfer between cultures; besides qualitative methodologies, quantitative frameworks; besides descriptive approaches, the normative questioning of political theory, legal studies, philosophy and theology. The methods of the digital humanities occupy a prominent place in the research work of the Cluster, which also makes use of oral history, narrative interviews, participatory observation, discourse analysis, but also of numismatics and archaeological approaches, as well as text mining and text encoding. By using these different methods, we can examine and break down for the purposes of our investigation the rich material in the history of religion, such as normative texts, pictorial symbols, material artefacts, and ritual practices.

Deep historical dimension and relevance to the present. The variety of methods, approaches and theories used allows us to address the blind spots of disciplinary research, to go beyond the inventory of knowledge deemed secure, to place this inventory in a different light, and to generate new knowledge. Developing alternative points of view and new perspectives is one of the major benefits of interdisciplinary work.

Interdisciplinary work enables us to assume a distanced and reflexive stance, which in turn allows us to gain an altered view of current problems and challenges. Thus, interdisciplinary work not only reconstructs history as something that has happened, but also as something that could have happened differently, and can also be seen differently. Precisely the attempt not only to establish the fact that change occurred, but also to explain why it occurred, has to view history as contingent and to locate history within the domain of unrealized possibilities (Why in this way? Why now? Why here?). Such a broadening of the horizon also alters how we deal with the problems of the present. It does not take the past for granted, and does not misrepresent the past as a mere prelude to the present; rather, it faces up to its peculiarity. It is precisely in its difference to the present that the past can illuminate the issues that concern us today.

Thus, we can claim alongside Ernst Troeltsch that the ultimate goal of history is to understand the present (Troeltsch 2011: 6).

3.1.5 Organizational measures

Institutional conditions

There are at the University of Münster uniquely favourable conditions for our research programme. The Cluster brings together members from *seven faculties* (Catholic Theology, Protestant Theology, Law, Educational and Social Sciences, Psychology, History/Philosophy, and Philology). In the previous funding phase, *about 200 researchers from more than 20 disciplines in the humanities and social sciences from 14 countries* worked together. The Cluster therefore represents the entire spectrum of the humanities at the University of Münster. What sets the Cluster apart and distinguishes it in an essential way from other research groups working on religion both at home and abroad is its breadth of perspectives, disciplines and methodological approaches. It combines both denominational and non-denominational research on religion; disciplines related to the present and historical disciplines; empirical and normative approaches; and basic research and applied sciences. During its lifetime, the Cluster has brought about significant and sustained structural changes throughout the University (see in more detail 5.2.1). We should point in this context to the establishment of *new professorial chairs*, the recruitment of an *Alexander von Humboldt professorship for Jewish Studies*, the founding of the *Centre for Religion and Modernity (CRM)*, the expansion in terms of personnel and structure of the *Centre for Eastern Mediterranean Studies (GKM)* and of the *Centre for Medieval and Early Modern Studies (CMF)*, as well as the founding of the *Centre for Islamic Theology (CIT)*. With the help of the Cluster, the University of Münster has therefore created a *network of centres* to sustain research on religion, a network that forms the institutional backbone of research on religion not only in the Cluster but across the University as a whole. In cooperation with the Centre for Religious Studies (CERES) of the Ruhr University in Bochum, the CRM acquired in 2016 the interdisciplinary *Graduate School, "Regulating Religious Plurality in the Region"*. The Cluster can also cooperate with the *Collaborative Research Centre (Sonderforschungsbereich) "Cultures of Decision-Making"* (SFB 1150), which was established in 2016.

These structural changes have turned the University of Münster into a nationally and internationally renowned centre for interdisciplinary research on religion. On the one hand, the long-standing cooperation between researchers in the Cluster has produced forms of collaboration that have proven their worth over the long term. On the other, the Cluster has exerted a strong influence on the University as a whole and enabled cooperation between Cluster members and other members of the University. Finally, the work of the Cluster has led to a large number of collaborations, both regionally and nationally as well as internationally, bringing the Cluster

into contact with other research projects and promoting scholarly exchange far beyond the University itself.

Measures planned

The new Cluster will build on the structures and working relations already created. But it will also go far beyond these in terms of content, structure and personnel. The measures that we use to pursue our academic goals represent a link between the structures created and the new priorities. They relate directly to the goals set out in section 2 above, and to the observations just made regarding the methodological implementation of our research programme.

Strengthening explanatory approaches. To analyze the dynamic relationship between religion and politics, we need to employ approaches that both understand *and* explain phenomena. The cultural-historical perspective on the changing relationship between religion and politics clearly dominated previous funding periods. The proven approaches of cultural history to the object of study will continue to play a central role in the future. But, in order to do full justice to the new research question (i.e., *how can religion develop political dynamics, where do its dynamics lie, and where are the limits of these dynamics?*), we need now to place greater emphasis on explanatory approaches, too. This concern leads us to take the following measures:

- Bringing approaches developed in the social sciences more into the Cluster.
- Including psychology as a new discipline in the Cluster.
- Creating a multi-level large-scale project in collaboration between the disciplines that work in an explanatory manner – namely, sociology (Detlef Pollack), political science (Bernd Schlipphak), and psychology (Mitja Back, Gerald Echterhoff).
- Cooperating with research institutions that specialize in the social sciences, such as the Social Science Research Centre in Berlin (WZB) (see 5.3.1(3)).

Promoting the exchange between denominational and non-denominational research on religion. The perspective internal to religion is just as important as the external perspective when it comes to analyzing the productive power of religion in the double tension between *tradition and innovation*, and between *intrinsicness and contextuality*. Coupling the two perspectives is central not only to non-denominational research on religion, but also to a theology that reflects critically on itself, and that is committed to proving the validity of beliefs before the forum of reason. Both denominational and non-denominational research on religion therefore always deal with intra-, inter- and extra-religious issues. To balance all the intrareligious and extrareligious perspectives, we will take the following measures:

- Increasing the weight of theological research by appointing a further two renowned theologians to the circle of the principal investigators (Albrecht Beutel, Michael Seewald), including one from dogmatics, the core discipline of theology (Michael Seewald).

- Establishing a new permanent position of a senior lecturer for religious studies that will join the existing professorships in religious studies at the departments of Protestant theology (Perry Schmidt-Leukel) and Catholic theology (Annette Wilke). The new position is explicitly oriented to the cultural and social sciences. Together, they will form the basis of the planned Department for Religious Studies, which will include denominational and non-denominational religious studies (see 5.2.2(1)).
- Creating a “Campus of Religions” to unite Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox and Islamic theology under one roof (see 5.2.2(3)). This “place of short distances” with common seminar rooms, lecture halls, and a shared library is designed to become a forum for interreligious and intercultural dialogue, lively encounters, and academic exchange both within the theologies as well as between the theologies and non-theological research on religion.
- Establishing an institute in Münster for the research and maintenance of Islamic inter-religious and intrareligious dialogue in Germany, Egypt and worldwide, which will be jointly managed with Al-Azhar, Cairo (see 5.3.1(2)).

Intensifying research on basic normative questions. Given the growing number of conflicts resulting from the increasing diversity of religious traditions, there is a greater socio-political need for reflection on the normative foundations of the social order and on the public role that religion can or should assume. In order to deal adequately with the question of the legitimacy of the modern constitutional state to regulate these conflicts affecting public life, schools and charitable organizations, we will adopt the following measures:

- Bringing into the Cluster normatively oriented projects from theology, philosophy, and the political and legal sciences.
- Establishing a Research Cloud (“Genesis and validity”) to deal with normative issues in the relationships between religion, politics, law and society (see 3.4.3(5)).
- Cooperating with research institutes that deal with current fields of conflict around religious-political issues, such as the teaching of the Islamic religion in schools (Centre for Turkish Studies and Integration Research (ZfTI) in Duisburg-Essen), Christian and Islamic charitable organizations (TU Dortmund), and the interreligious teaching of religion in German schools (Comenius Institute for Educational Studies in Münster) (see 5.3.1(4)).
- Bringing an ethnologist with a research focus on Africa (Dorothea E Schulz) into the Cluster and developing research on Africa that focuses on religion. We will address the question of what constitutes appropriate legal and political regulation in dealing with problems of religious diversity not only by studying cases of religious-political conflict in Europe, but also by comparing these to how religious diversity is dealt with in North and East Africa.

Establishing new priorities in the history of religion in Europe. The following measures will meet the goal of responding constructively to existing research deficits in the study of the political role of religion in Europe:

- Establishing in the faculty of educational and social sciences a new W3 professorship in the “Social-scientific study of Islam in the Europe of the 20th and 21st century”, to be financed by the University of Münster (see 5.2.2(1)).
- Establishing a new W2 professorship in “Educational studies with a focus on education and migration”, also in the faculty of educational and social sciences, to be financed by the University of Münster (see 5.2.2(1)).
- Creating a new W2 professorship in “Orthodox Christianity in the 19th-21st century”, funded by the University of Münster (see 5.2.2(1)).
- Inviting internationally renowned experts in Orthodoxy (Cyril Hovorun, Los Angeles, Irina Paert, Tartu, and others) as fellows to Münster.
- Providing the existing MA programme in Linguistics at the University of Münster with a focus on Eastern European Studies.

Promoting interdisciplinarity and methodological diversity. Diversity of methods and approaches is part of interdisciplinary work and allows researchers to adopt different perspectives, to pursue different research questions, and to work with different frameworks. This diversity is necessary given the complexity of the issue at hand. At the same time, interdisciplinary work exposes the scholar to the danger of being misunderstood, exceeding his or her competence, and being averse to risk. In order to facilitate cooperation between the different disciplines with their various approaches and methods, it makes sense to create forms of working that are able through their methodology to ensure and professionalize exchange across disciplinary borders. The following measures will serve this goal:

- Establishing a methodological platform for quantitative and qualitative social research to provide methodological support for projects and to act as a service facility for colleagues.
- Establishing theory platforms to deal with fundamental interdisciplinary concepts and theoretical approaches, and to reflect critically on the status of long-term perspectives and processual terms in the historical and social sciences. The theory platforms will match in content the structure of the theoretical perspectives already mentioned (see also 3.2.2).
- Establishing a new interdisciplinary MA programme “Religion and Politics” (see 5.3.2).

Increasing international visibility. The Cluster’s scholarly exchange with the international academic community provides its own work with important momentum and opens up the horizon for new central questions, methods and theories. International cooperation cannot proceed in one direction, however. We have to ensure more than ever not only that we benefit from

international research, but also that our research findings are taken into account internationally. To achieve this goal, we will pursue the following measures:

- Intensifying existing international contacts and expanding prestigious international partnerships (see 5.3.1(2)).
- Establishing an international Fellowship Programme (see 5.3.1(1)).
- Increasing the number of publications in top international journals.
- Supporting international publications through the establishment of a foreign-language proofreading service (see 4.3.1).

These measures will generate new fields of research and open up innovative research perspectives. They are able to create momentum for international research on religion, to raise the social significance of research on religion in Germany and to provide more *transferable knowledge* to guide political action. The *long-term goal* of the Cluster is to create a university institute for interdisciplinary research on religion that leads the way in Germany and Europe.

3.1.6 Position of the Cluster nationally and internationally

There are various university departments, non-university research institutions, and theological colleges in the world conducting first-class research on religion. We cannot do them full honour here, but mention only the Al-Azhar University in Cairo, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and the University of Notre Dame in Indiana (USA). We have long enjoyed relationships of cooperation with many of them (see 5.3.1). However, none of these institutions covers anywhere near as broad a spectrum as the Cluster in terms of the religions that it investigates, the diversity of its disciplines and methods, and the historical depth of its analyses. Nowhere else can be found such a linking of historical issues with issues relevant to the present day, of theoretical with empirical perspectives, of normative with descriptive approaches, and in particular of denominational with non-denominational research on religion. In this respect, the Cluster at the University of Münster represents, to our knowledge, a unique institution both nationally and internationally.

But there are nonetheless a number of major national and international research centres that are particularly important in the field of religion and politics.

National level. There is **at the national level** the **Centre for Religious Studies** (CERES) in Bochum, which, unlike the Cluster, has a strong focus on South and East Asia and its entanglement with Europe. As a cooperation partner in the region, CERES is therefore an ideal complement to the Cluster, which is why we would like to cooperate even more closely with it in the future (see 5.3.1(4)).

We also cooperate with the **Max Weber Centre in Erfurt**, whose former director, Hans Joas, was long a member of the advisory board in the Cluster. The Centre focuses mainly on the period of antiquity, and barely deals with contemporary religious issues. The main difference

between the Cluster and the Centre lies in the fact that the latter follows in the footsteps of Max Weber himself and focuses on interdisciplinary and historically comparative social sciences, and does not include any theologies.

This also applies to the **Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity (MPI-MMG)** in Göttingen, which deals with social diversity in contemporary societies and takes an exclusively external perspective on religion. Through the Institute's cooperation with the **University of Göttingen**, a strong research network dealing with religion has emerged there, but this network features neither Catholic nor Islamic theology, and nor does it have an independent centre for Jewish Studies.

At the **international level**, the **Centre for Religion, Economy and Politics (ZRWP)** in Switzerland, with which the Cluster has worked closely for years and with whom future joint projects have already been agreed, also shares a thematic focus with the Cluster since it also considers political and economic issues. However, it is much narrower than the Cluster in terms of the disciplines that it comprises; it concentrates mainly on Christianity; and it only takes account of the historical dimension to a limited extent.

The research platform "**Religion and Transformation in Contemporary Society**" (RaT) at the University of Vienna, which was founded in 2010, is thematically related to the Cluster insofar as it also deals with the mutual relations between religion and processes of social change in the global context. Unlike the Cluster, however, the research platform concentrates exclusively on processes of transformation in the present. In addition, its main interest is in textual analysis, whereas the Cluster also deals with material culture (archaeology, art history), and with social practices and attitudes (ethnology, sociology, political science, psychology).

The **Berkley Centre for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs** at Georgetown University in Washington, DC is an ideal partner for the Cluster, since it also deals with the tense relationship between religion and politics in the USA, Europe and the world as a whole, with problems of religion, violence and peace, as well as with issues to do with the normative and state regulation of religious plurality and the protection of religious freedom. Working together with the Centre has provided valuable momentum for our own work. José Casanova, for example, was a member of the academic advisory board during the Cluster's first funding phase. However, like other similar institutions, the Berkley Centre's work lacks an historical depth of analysis. In addition, its work is based very much on political science, and is not as broadly interdisciplinary as the Cluster.

The Cluster also cooperates with the **Pew Research Centre in Washington, DC**, which, covering a wide range of issues of public concern, deals not only with religious and political issues. The financial resources of the Pew Research Centre exceed those of the Cluster many times, allowing it to conduct studies on political, demographic, religious and social developments

throughout the world. It sees itself as a “fact tank” and provides the interested public with helpful statistics and survey findings, but does not pursue its own systematically formulated research questions. Like many such research institutes, it is also interested exclusively in contemporary issues.

An interdisciplinary research group concerned with “**Religion and Politics in a Globalized World**” is currently being established at the **University of Oslo**; the group has itself established contact with the Cluster and is interested in working with us in the future. The initiative for establishing the group came from the Department of Culture Studies and Oriental Languages at the University of Oslo, and its keywords in terms of content are “Confrontation”, “Mobilization” and “Communication”. Its geographical focus is Asia and, again, it is concerned primarily with current developments.

The Cluster has a much broader disciplinary, methodological, theoretical and historical scope than all the research groups mentioned here. But, despite its diversity, the Cluster is also not *too* heterogeneous, since it focuses on the one hand on Europe, the Mediterranean and their global entanglements, and on the other on the three monotheistic, book-based religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, and their ancient historical contexts. We have deliberately refrained from giving greater consideration to the religions of South and East Asia, since, unlike Heidelberg, Göttingen and indeed London, the University of Münster has no disciplinary specialism here and would barely be able to compete. We have decided instead to focus on our existing strengths, to fill the small disciplinary gaps through new professorships, and also to work together with external research groups such as CERES that provide for complementary focuses.

3.2 Structure of the research programme

Cooperation in the Cluster is structured according to specific **fields of research** and **theoretical perspectives** combined in flexible **Research Clouds**. The fields of research are the stable basis of the research programme in terms both of content and organization. Each individual project is anchored permanently in one of the three fields of research (see 3.2.1). The theoretical perspectives denote the different theoretical approaches and concepts that guide our study of the fields of research. These are discussed at the level of interdisciplinary theory platforms. Each project can connect to one or more of five theory platforms (see 3.2.2). Finally, the Research Clouds are flexible working groups that, according to need, combine aspects from different fields of research with different theoretical perspectives. The number of Research Clouds is open, and their duration and composition are not set in stone. This recognizes the fact that research questions may perhaps change, and that the structures in the Cluster must be able to adapt to the emergence of different research goals (3.2.3).

3.2.1 Fields of research

The work of the Cluster on the **previous fields of research** – normativity, mediality, integration, violence – has proven successful in many ways. However, the underlying concepts have sometimes turned out to be too static. What transpired in our actual work was that the phenomena denoted by normativity, integration and violence are often linked dynamically with their respective opposite: for example, normativity with informal networks and controlled tolerance of ambiguity; integration with partial exclusion and contained conflict; violence with strategies limiting damage and value-rational conflict mitigation. To capture the dynamics of religion in the social and political context, we will therefore now treat the central fields of research as comprising *relationships of tension*. Three such fields of research form the basis of our work: 1) transcultural entanglement and disentanglement, 2) religious diversity and legal-political unity, and 3) criticism of religion and apologetics.

(1) Transcultural entanglement and disentanglement

Cultures in general, and religions in particular, should never be essentialized by being conceived of as self-contained, homogeneous, objective entities; they do not emerge in spaces isolated from one another. Rather, their emergence and development always occur in interaction with other religions and cultures: in processes of mixture, translation, transformation, acculturation, assimilation, reception, interpretation, and reinterpretation; but also as a result of resistance, opposition and even overthrowing. This is expressed by the concept of “transculturality”, which, in contrast to “cultural transfer”, emphasizes that processes of cultural interaction and appropriation are always also processes of entanglement that leave neither side completely unchanged.

The Cluster has already focused on transcultural entanglements between religious cultures, on the spread of religious cults, symbols and semantics, on their intermingling and how they transform each other. We now wish to add two new elements to our study of transcultural entanglements. First, we wish to investigate how far and in what way transcultural and transreligious entanglements contribute to the *capacity of religion to renew itself and to mobilize people*. Analyzing such entanglements is particularly important when it comes to explaining the specific *dynamics between preserving tradition and openness to innovation*. Periods of cultural and religious innovation have always been periods of intensified cross-border interaction of ideas, goods and people. We surmise that processes of translation, internalization, and creative reinvention are also crucial to religious innovations and religiously driven social and political changes, and we intend to test this hypothesis by conducting a very broad range of historical-empirical case studies.

Second, we will focus in the future not only on entanglements, but also on *processes of disentanglement, demarcation, exclusion and opposition with regard to the “other”, as well as on*

processes of forgetting – processes that, exactly like those of entanglement, always affect both sides. If processes of interaction and exchange do not simply adopt, but actually always also transform, the other, then these processes can also lead to resistance towards and rejection of the other. The question is: what conditions tend to lead to appropriation and syncretization; what conditions, to reactions of rejection and demarcation (or even of forgetting); and what conditions, to the one turning into the other? Retreating to one's own religious tradition and thereby demarcating oneself as different from other religious traditions often serve not only to safeguard the contents of one's own tradition, but also to assert them in the face of competing claims and to impinge upon these claims. Processes of disentanglement therefore fulfil the function not only of preservation. Rather, religions often draw their dynamic and culture-changing potential precisely by referring to their tradition.

In order to understand, interpret and explain the dynamics of transcultural entanglements and disentanglements, we need to examine intrareligious, interreligious and extrareligious relationships. At the forefront of work in the field of research "Transcultural entanglements and disentanglements" are *interreligious* relationships, though.

(2) Religious diversity and legal-political unity

The question of how people deal with religious plurality, and regulate and shape the coexistence of different religious communities legally and politically, has played a prominent role throughout history. Legal-political regulations have largely taken shape on the basis of religious practices and beliefs, and have for centuries been barely separable from them. Political rule was and still is often shaped and legitimized by religion. The question is: how do legal-political systems founded on religion deal with members of minority religions, and how do they cope with conflicts caused by religious diversity? Even modern states with secularized liberal constitutions that aim to guarantee all religious communities the same space for development are confronted with this problem. How religion, politics and law differentiate themselves, or perhaps again de-differentiate, how far law and politics compete with religion as alternative instruments for the normative regulation of social coexistence – these questions are completely open once more, now that the classic theories of secularization and differentiation have been called into question. With its interest in the dynamics emanating from religion, the Cluster therefore now has before it a broad field of research that is politically highly topical.

We investigate on the one hand how religious dynamics affect the formation of legal-political models of order, how they have shaped their emergence, and what creative potential they possess to change these models. We wish to pursue this question through both transcultural comparison and long-term historical investigation. The religious shaping of legal and political norms impacts not only on the state, however, but also on the pre-state, the cultural and the informal area of normativity. In order to avoid a one-sided fixation on the formal regulation of

religious diversity, and to take account of the diversity of arrangements between religion and politics, we are also on the other hand interested in how the dynamics of religion affect non-state rules, norms and contracts. But, third, we also ask the reverse question of how legal-political regulations themselves influence the semantics, identities and forms of organization of religious communities.

How religious diversity in its dynamics has influenced legal regulations and political relations of power and dominance; how it has shaped informal regulations; and how in turn legal-political systems have dealt in different cultures throughout history with religious diversity and the social and religious conflicts arising from this diversity – these are the three guiding research questions that are at the centre of the field of research “Religious diversity and legal-political unity”. It follows that this field of research is primarily concerned with *extrareligious* connections.

(3) Criticism of religion and apologetics

A new field of research for the Cluster is the tense relationship between criticism of religion and apologetics, a relationship that makes particularly evident the dynamic character of religion. For, these are phenomena that contradict the view that religions often have of themselves as providing essential, transhistorical values and ultimate justifications. Criticism of religion and apologetics thus help significantly to transform and dynamize religions from within. We can again study the dialectics between criticism of religion and apologetics in terms of intra-, inter- and extrareligious relationships. Given these dialectics, though, we intend to give greater weight to the *intrareligious* dimension, since it is criticism internal to religion that is particularly capable of altering religions. Yet, criticism internal to religion often does not see itself as innovative at all, but on the contrary often presents itself as a return to a lost or corrupted tradition. In turn, apologetics by no means only preserves tradition, but can also itself unfold a transformative dynamic. It is these complex relationships between religious *tradition and innovation* that interest us most when it comes to criticism of religion and apologetics.

How religious communities deal with criticism of religion, how far they themselves generate or allow and use such criticism – this says much about their ability to learn. How *innovative* and adaptable are they, and how far do they refuse to learn and instead seek to keep their *traditions* unchanged? This raises the question as to what conditions internal and external to religion determine whether a religious community is open or closed in the face of criticism, and what role is played in the suppression or allowance of criticism by legal regulations, contacts across cultures and moral norms, but also by religious majority ratios in each case and the public status of religion.

Criticism of religion and apologetics can perform different political and social functions. Defending religion can contribute to cultural self-assertion in the face of external threats, be they real or fictitious; it can help to valorize social groups when they are confronted with attempts

to stigmatize them; it can serve to immunize dogmatic positions when they are subjected to critical questioning. Likewise, criticism of religion can produce claims of superiority, degrade those who think differently, but also undermine fundamentalist religious attitudes. Working on an interdisciplinary basis allows us to examine patterns and determinants when it comes to the way that religion is involved in the escalation or de-escalation of conflicts. A special role is played here not least by the medial form used by criticism and apologetics – from the learned disputation to the polemical caricature.

3.2.2 Theoretical perspectives

Crossing the fields of research are certain **theoretical perspectives** within the architecture of the Cluster. Objects of research in the historical, cultural and social sciences can be viewed from praxeological, discourse-theoretical, social-structural, semantic, spatial and temporal perspectives. However, the problem of highly abstract theoretical categories such as space, time, practice, structure, discourse, semantics, culture, etc. is that they include too much and are not specific enough. We have therefore chosen theoretical perspectives that, while applicable in principle to each of our objects of research, are also at the same time less abstract, thereby allowing us to focus and sharpen our theoretical approach. The central perspectives from which we will view the three fields of research are: (A) mediality, (B) differentiation, (C) inequality, (D) conflict, and (E) emotionality.

These are terms that vary in their meaning according to the disciplinary context in which they are used. Thus, the danger of misunderstandings between disciplines is omnipresent. In order to benefit in practice from each other across disciplinary borders, we must therefore communicate precisely about these concepts and the theoretical approaches that underlie them. The multidisciplinary theoretical platforms mentioned above are designed to serve this purpose, with members of the three fields of research choosing freely among them according to their research goals.

(A) Mediality. “Reality” is not immediately accessible to observation, but is always conveyed medially. Media theories analyze both the conditions of possibility of, and limits to, communication (Krämer 2008) – and not only communication among people, but also between people and transcendent actors. The question of mediality is more or less essential for the analysis of the dynamics of religion. Religion always has to do with the unavailable, the inaccessible, the invisible, the intangible – in short, with transcendence. Regardless of how transcendence is defined (or perhaps simply left undefined) in the individual religions, the inaccessible can only gain relevance for communities and individuals when it “represents” itself, materializes, enters into experiences, links up with images, texts, sounds, numbers, rituals – and thereby becomes communicable (Balke/Siegert/Vogl 2015). A central question here is who has control over and

decides on issues of religious media, and thereby controls and decides on access to the transcendent. Indeed, power issues and issues of inclusion and exclusion cannot be separated from problems concerning the medial communication of the transcendent. But a media-theoretical perspective is also indispensable for the study of communication *about* religion. Considering religions from the point of view of their mediality, their materiality, their forms of symbolization, their textuality, as well as the interaction between different media, which can send quite different signals, is therefore essential for all three of the Cluster's fields of research (Meyer 2012).

(B) Differentiation. Theories of social differentiation (Émile Durkheim, Max Weber, Niklas Luhmann, Pierre Bourdieu) offer approaches to the changing relationship between religion and politics that are both accessible to other disciplines and highly contested. In particular, the concept of secularization has often been understood in terms of a theory of differentiation. Social differentiation means very generally that in the course of history, in the constant process of change brought about by events and upheavals, of innovations and setbacks, of repetitions and forgetting, social distinctions emerge that remain relatively stable over time and that can no longer be easily reversed or ignored. These distinctions concern institutional arrangements, social roles, rationalities, discourses, practices, etc., which differentiate themselves from each other in a cumulative and aversive manner. These distinctions are always subject to conflicts and processes of negotiation. Differentiation explicitly includes interdependencies between what is differentiated, as well as shifts in borders between them. In contrast, dedifferentiation denotes the dissolution of borders and the diffusion of different rationalities of meaning (Gerhards 1991).

We have already discussed intensively in the past Cluster phase the question of how far theories of differentiation can form an interdisciplinary foundation that underpins the social, legal and historical sciences, and which of these theories are most helpful. It is difficult to achieve consensus across disciplines here. But, given the great role that theories of differentiation have played and still play in debates on secularization, it is imperative that we continue to deal with these theories and possibly develop them further.

(C) Inequality. With theories of social inequality from Karl Marx to Amartya Sen, the social sciences provide another central key to grasp the fundamental structure of societies. If theories of differentiation consider the fundamental structure of society at the horizontal level, then theories of inequality do so from a vertical perspective. The dimensions of inequality include age, gender, income, status, education, ethnicity, and not least religion. We can consistently ask how religious systems of normativity and meaning each relate to the other dimensions of social inequality, and whether and how they reinforce or counteract them. The concept of "intersectionality" (Kimberlé Crenshaw) will be used to examine the relationship between the different

dimensions of inequality. The overlapping of these different dimensions tends to increase social asymmetry – for example, when members of a minority religion also have a low level of education and a low average income. Moreover, we will investigate how features of religious affiliation and gender relate to each other, and to what extent religions exacerbate gender asymmetries – for example, if the superiority of a religious group is linked to the particular sexual “purity” of, and therefore control over, women (Gedalof 1999: 34ff.; Wohlrab-Sahr/Rosenstock 2004). The concept of intersectionality is helpful not only for explaining the stabilization of systems of inequality, but also for analyzing their dynamics of change. The concept is therefore of particular interest for the Cluster when it comes to the central question of the genuine power that religion has to affect society.

(D) Conflict. Since Georg Simmel, conflict can be understood as a way of societalization. According to this understanding, conflicts develop a socially integrating function by renegotiating social norms, values and structures. In contrast, game theories emphasize the potential of conflicts to escalate, which can have disintegrative consequences. In any case, conflicts are seen as an important engine of social change. In keeping with the central question of the Cluster, we need to examine the extent to which religion acts as an autonomous factor of conflict and influences the structure of social conflicts in a specific way. The distinction made in conflict theory between conflicts of value or recognition and conflicts of interest seems helpful here (Honneth 1994; Willems 2016). Conflicting material interests can be reconciled by dividing the contested goods; however, symbolic goods – such as honour and social identity, the recognition of highest values and truths of faith – are usually considered by the participants to be non-negotiable, and must therefore be defended at all costs. In reality, however, conflicts of interest and value are usually entangled, and are about both social recognition *and* economic redistribution (Honneth/Fraser 2003: 89). As a rule, the overlapping of different factors of conflict intensifies social conflicts and gives the parties involved a lever with which they can influence relations of power distribution, ownership and recognition. Such ideas developed in conflict theory are of central interest to our question of the dynamic power of religion.

(E) Emotionality. Emotionality is a constitutive element of social perceptions and relationships (Riis/Woodhead 2010; von Scheve 2009). Emotions are always historically and culturally coded; they shape the individual and collective construction of images of self and other, exacerbate or mitigate intergroup conflicts, and facilitate or hinder social ties (Halperin 2016). Potentially, all of the Cluster’s fields of research can be considered with regard to the relevance of emotionality. However, we must take into account that in this field very different terminological and theoretical traditions cross over. In line with ancient rhetoric, it is possible to speak of “affects”; this terminology is taken up today by affect theory to explain community and group

formation. In medieval times, the representation of emotions served to communicate decisions (Althoff 2011). In contrast, if we speak of “feeling”, then we are placing ourselves in the tradition of the modern conception of the subject, as it first developed in the late 18th century. “Emotion”, to mention a third line of thinking, is the category referred to in a research direction that tends more towards cognitive science, a direction that has also gained a foothold in the humanities (cognitive narratology/poetics) in recent decades.

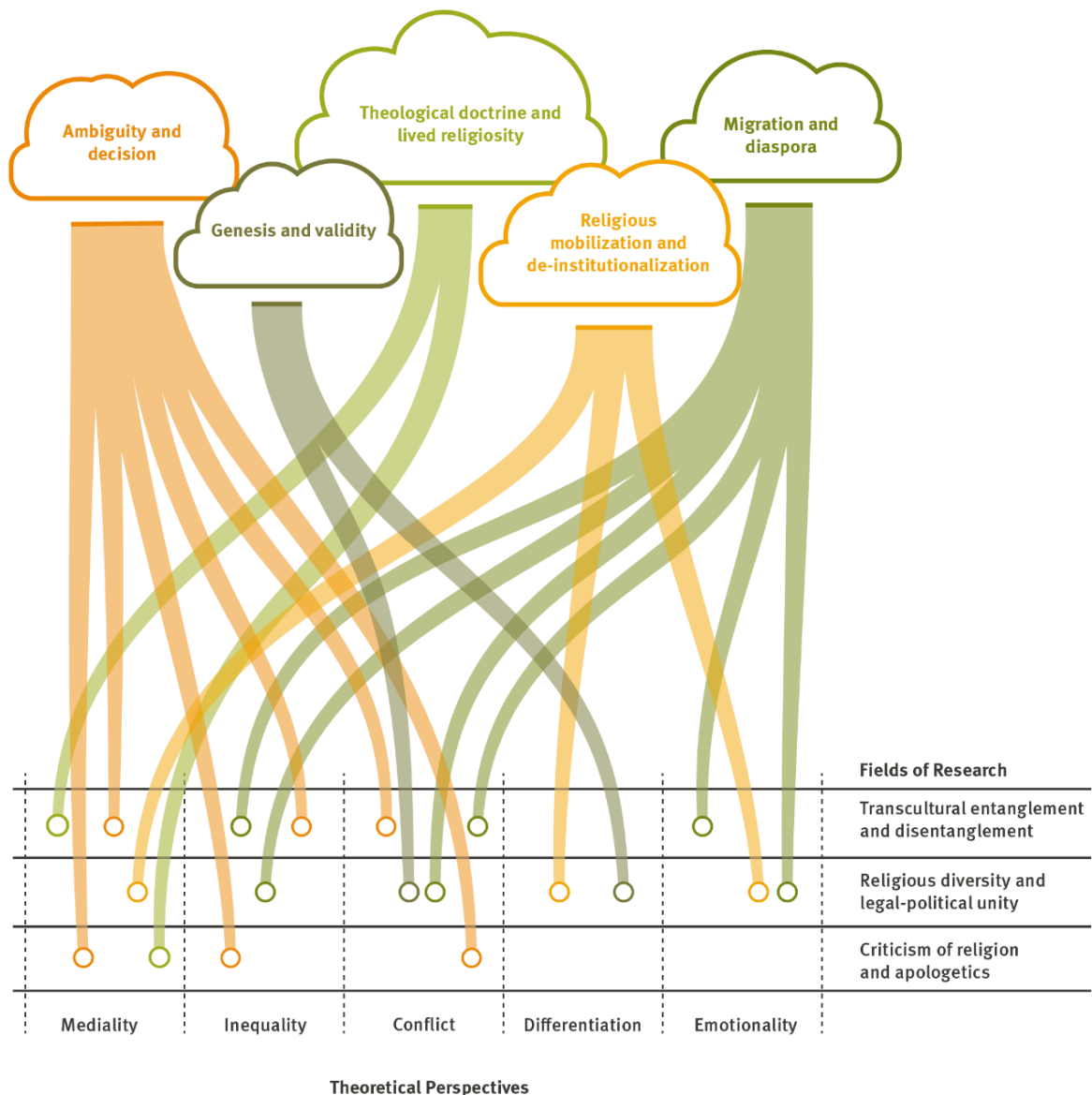
The perspective of emotionality is important for the guiding questions of the Cluster in a number of respects. Thus, the question arises on the one hand as to whether we can speak of specifically religious emotions, whether it is possible to observe phases of intensified religious affectivity (or, conversely, periods of its decline), and which emotions have been and are permissible and influential in discourse in different historical contexts. And, on the other, as to what effects religiously based emotions have at an individual and collective level, to what extent they incite social conflicts or help overcome them, and in what way and with what rhetorical and aesthetic processes and media (in the visual arts, architecture, literature, religious texts and culture of debates) they achieve their effects.

3.2.3 Research Clouds

Work in the Cluster is structured by combining fields of research with theoretical perspectives. Each project belongs to an empirical field of research and makes use of theoretical perspectives. To achieve a flexible form of work, we are also planning the formation of larger “Research Clouds”, in each of which several fields of research and theoretical perspectives will overlap. The Research Clouds combine different empirical fields of research and theoretical perspectives, and condense the different analytical viewpoints into specific research questions.

The Research Clouds will develop from the concrete project work of researchers in the Cluster; they can change their focus in the course of their work, disband and re-establish themselves in a different composition. We therefore recognize the fact that research practice often does not follow strict systematic specifications, and support the productive dynamics that result when disciplines and research approaches actually cooperate with each other. Research in the Cluster, which is based on interdisciplinary and cross-epochal cooperation, takes place not only in the stable fields of research, but also in such flexible Research Clouds.

Figure 1: Composition of Research Clouds



The **following five Research Clouds** have emerged so far on the basis of an Ideas Contest (on the selection process, see 4.3.2), and are planned for the first half of the funding phase (without excluding the possibility that additional Clouds might be created):

(1) Ambiguity and decision. Religions can be distinguished from one another according to the degree to which they are embedded in cultural contexts (→ field of research “Transcultural entanglement and disentanglement”). Religious customs, symbols and rites are often so much a component of local, regional and national cultures that they can hardly be distinguished from them, such religious cultures being characterized by a high degree of traditionality, informality and tolerance towards (Bauer 2011) or indifference to (Althoff 2014: 86) ambiguity. At the same

time, the history of religion is full of innovations – ethical narrowings, theological dogmatizations, social radicalizations, cultic purifications, etc. – that detach religion from its surrounding culture, break open traditions, suppress ambiguity, and push for decision, by demanding, for example, doctrinal disambiguation, social demarcation and demonstrative confession of faith (Roy 2008).

The tension between cultural-religious ambiguity and religious insistence on decision involves phenomena such as normative ambiguity, religious indecision and persistence of tradition, but also charismatic upheavals, awakenings and the destruction of tradition. Through such innovations, religious communities and movements not only exacerbate the tensions in their own traditions, but also bring themselves into sharper opposition with other religious groups in their cultural environment (→ field of research “Criticism of religion and apologetics”; → theoretical perspective “Conflict”). Since we concentrate on the dynamics of tradition and innovation, we are particularly interested in working out how, by disambiguating ambiguous traditions, e.g., by reinterpreting them in a fundamentalist manner, religions can become the engine of social change, the focal point of political protest, the attractor of youth cultures critical of their civilization, the power source of charitable and cultural initiatives, the generator of emancipatory movements, etc. Which media religious communities use; which mobilization strategies they employ; which kinds of social inequality they address – these are all important issues when it comes to understanding the effects that such communities have (→ theoretical perspectives “Mediality” and “Inequality”).

(2) Theological doctrine and lived religiosity. The tension between theology and religion, theological doctrine and lived religiosity, reflexive reassurance of faith and religious practice, permeates the entire history of religion. While new forms of religious practice and beliefs spontaneously emerge from time to time, theological authorities typically feel called upon to limit, rationally contain, and systematically organize this uncontrolled growth (→ field of research “Criticism of religion and apologetics”). It would be wrong, however, to situate the dynamic factor only on the side of lived religiosity. Rather, innovations and critical momentum emanate from both sides in the manifold intrareligious relations between theological doctrine and lived religious identity. And, of course, when analyzing these relations, we also need to take into account the extrareligious contexts, too (Seewald 2016).

The tension between theological doctrine and the practice of faith already manifests itself in the formation of authoritative theological texts themselves. No matter whether they are canonical documents, ritualistic texts, or doctrinal writings, the texts formulated with an authoritative claim owe themselves to a religious practice, stand in a disparate, and often oral, tradition of transmission, and are still involved even after their establishment in complex practices and

exposed to polyphonic interpretation (→ theoretical perspective “Mediality”). An important concern of the Research Cloud is to break down the history of how authoritative religious texts emerged, to work out the theological and political intentions inscribed in them, and by doing so to situate their emergence contextually. In order to demonstrate and illustrate the various layers in the history of emergence and transmission, this Research Cloud will include methods from the digital humanities.

Where theological texts regarded as binding are historicized, this of course also has direct effects on lived religiosity, since the faithful often perceive the texts not as historically developed, theologically contentious and requiring interpretation, but as revelations that can claim divine authority and literal truth. Such a literal understanding of the texts places them beyond discussion and hampers dialogue within and between communities of faith (→ fields of research “Transcultural entanglement and disentanglement” and “Criticism of religion and apologetics”). But lived religious beliefs and identities can also have a corrective effect on theological doctrines, questioning them and challenging them to adjust and modify themselves.

(3) Migration and diaspora. Migratory movements regularly result in changes not only to the distribution of religious minorities and majorities in the regions concerned, but also to the religious semantics, interpretive patterns and practices of both the migrants and the host society (→ field of research “Transcultural entanglement and disentanglement”). An issue much debated in migration research is to what extent and due to which legal, political and social conditions the religiosity of migrants increases or decreases in the country of arrival, and how changes in religious ties in the second and third generation of immigrants can be explained (Diehl/Koenig 2009; Maliepaard *et al.* 2012; Fleischmann/Phalet 2012; Jacob/Kalter 2013). The Research Cloud aims to examine how migration changes the attitudes and habits of migrants as well as of the majority population in host countries – their cultural and religious self-identification, their view of themselves and of the other, their understanding of homeland, nationality and political affiliation, and also their religious practice.

In addition, the Research Cloud will deal with the contentious issue of how far religion promotes or impedes the social integration of immigrants. Under favourable circumstances, religion can serve immigrants as a place of emotional support and interpersonal recognition in a foreign country. It then functions as a training ground for practice in the rules of the host society, and as a tool to overcome foreignness, underprivilege and isolation (→ theoretical perspective “Inequality”). However, the findings so far vary considerably, depending on whether we look at the USA or Africa, at the Gulf region or Europe. While religious networks function as a bridge to integration in the USA (“bridging”), they seem to act more as a barrier in secular Europe (“bonding”) (Foner/Alba 2008; Chiswick 2014; Koopmans 2014). We intend to continue to explore the role that religious ties play in the process of integration in different social contexts.

Here, integration does not mean assimilation; rather, transnational migrants create their own social spaces between their country of origin and the country of arrival (→ field of research “Transcultural entanglement and disentanglement”).

However, integration processes are also influenced by the attitude that the host society has towards diaspora communities, as well as by how it manages migration and the legal regulations that it has (→ field of research “Religious diversity and legal-political unity”), with the tension between diaspora and majority population also sometimes escalating (→ theoretical perspectives “Conflict” and “Emotionality”). Nonetheless, we regard it as important to avoid a perspective that treats the state as the only relevant actor, and migrants merely as passive subjects.

(4) Religious mobilization and de-institutionalization. The political dynamics of religious ideas, beliefs, and practices largely depend on their social anchoring in religious communities and movements. Religious discourses are rooted – alongside communal rituals, collective belief systems and social identity – in social groups, networks, organizations, institutions and movements. However, the social basis of religious spectra of ideas, systems of interpretation, and semantics differs greatly and changes dramatically through history. At the centre of interest in this Research Cloud is the impact that the capacity of religious groups, communities, movements and institutions to integrate and mobilize in society has on their political power, and how this capacity varies historically.

It is necessary to examine how religious actors are able to mobilize their followers, and which strategies and means they use to do so. What happens when religious identities are linked to political interests, take up economic claims, or fuse with national identities, as can be observed in many parts of Eastern Europe, for example (→ theoretical perspective “Differentiation”)? Also interesting is the question of how religious organizations and institutions deal with the claims of individuals to religious self-determination, as well as the question of which organizational and discursive resources can be used by religious leaders. How far does the ability of religion to mobilize people depend on whether more cognitive-argumentative, aesthetic-sensory or performative-choreographic media are used (Schulz/Hinsch 2014; Schulz 2015)? (→ theoretical perspectives “Mediality” and “Emotionality”). Besides the strategies and activities used by religious entrepreneurs, we must also include in our analysis the cultural background and the legal-political structures of opportunity, as well as social demands and needs (→ field of research “Religious diversity and legal-political unity”).

(5) Genesis and validity. Dealing with the political dynamics of religion cannot avoid addressing the challenges posed by these dynamics to modern democracies today. The active role of

religious actors in political processes, the impact of religious traditions on the formation of collective identities, and the demand of diverse religious communities to have their ideas of individual living and public order taken into account have led to a debate about how modern societies understand themselves (Audi 2011; Stepan 2011; Laborde 2017). Are the principles of modern constitutional democracies – the secular justification of the civil and political rights pertaining to the individual, and the ideological neutrality of state action – still able to settle the conflicts resulting from the growing diversity of religious traditions and from their normative claims? (→ field of research “Religious diversity and legal-political unity”) This question encounters a consciousness that has already been shaken by the ambivalent consequences of modernity and by the questioning of its foundations long taken for granted. Can the general validity of these foundations still be guaranteed by excluding religious claims defined as particularistic, as provided by the model of the secular constitutional state? Must the different church/state models in Europe be redesigned to ensure the peaceful coexistence of different religious communities and ideological identities (Gerster/van Melis/Willems 2018)? (→ theoretical perspective “Conflict”) Can the modern liberal constitutional state, with its “secular, ‘free-standing’ foundations of legitimacy” (Habermas 1992: 399), itself justify its universalistic normative principles (Gutmann 2012: 304)? Or is it, due to its weak motivational power, perhaps even dependent on the religious resources of meaning and the strong impetus for solidarity provided by religion (Böckenförde 2007)? (→ theoretical perspective “Differentiation”) The dispute over how modernity understands itself is therefore also a dispute over the character of the religion that has returned, over its potential both for endangering societal bonds and for social-moral integration. The normative questions about the basis of modern democracy and its validity follow directly from the politicization of religion. They supplement the question of how the political dynamics of religion can be understood, and go beyond them by addressing the political-theoretical and social-philosophical implications of the politicization of the religious.

3.3 Staff and institutional composition of the Cluster of Excellence

Principal Investigators (PIs). As already stated, what sets the Cluster apart is that it unites different perspectives, namely the denominational and the non-denominational, the historical and those related to the present, and the empirical and the normative. It thus brings into its work Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, including forms of religiosity located in their environment, as well as the ancient prehistory of these religions and their global entanglements. This diversity is reflected in the composition of the PI group, which is recruited from all the humanities and social sciences faculties at the University of Münster. The disciplines that are particularly strongly represented by principal investigators are those of the Sociology of Religion (Detlef Pollack), Religious Studies (Astrid Reuter), Political Science (Ulrich Willems), Catholic Theology (Michael Seewald, Johannes Schnocks, Hubert Wolf), Protestant Theology (Albrecht

Beutel, Arnulf von Scheliha), Islamic Theology (Mouhanad Khorchide), Arabic Studies/Islamic Studies (Thomas Bauer), Jewish Studies (Regina Grundmann, Katrin Kogman-Appel), History (ancient: Johannes Hahn; medieval: Wolfram Drews, Sita Steckel; modern: Silke Hensel, Thomas Großbölting, Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger), Law (Thomas Gutmann, Nils Jansen, Fabian Wittreck), Ethnology (Dorothea E Schulz), Egyptology (Angelika Lohwasser), Modern German Literature (Martina Wagner-Egelhaaf), and Philosophy (Michael Quante).

Flexible participation structures. These principal investigators constitute the stable core of the Cluster. In addition, we will draw on the great potential of the participating faculties, and continue the broad culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that the Cluster has fostered over the last decade. The PIs will therefore be joined by a number of additional researchers who have already qualified for involvement in the Cluster by submitting relevant projects in an Ideas Contest, or who will qualify in the future. This includes not only professors, but also postdoctoral researchers and senior professors; members not only of the University of Münster, but also of universities and research institutes in the region; and cooperating partners abroad. As mentioned above, we attach great importance to flexible structures that make it possible to modify the group of participating researchers according to need and opportunity (e.g., through new appointments), and that allow us to ensure that the Cluster remains open to disciplinary expansions and new research themes (on the modalities of selection, see 4.3.2).

Selection of new PIs. To identify the main researchers for the new application, the Cluster agreed after thorough discussion on a procedure to renew the group of PIs. The PI assembly gave the task of selecting the new PIs to the members of the academic advisory board (comprising only members external to the University of Münster) and to the senior professors of the Cluster (who themselves were not eligible). All previous members of the Cluster expressed their willingness to accept the outcome of this selection process in advance. It has led not only to the group becoming younger on average, but also to the greater representation of women in the group. Thus, nine members joined the group of PIs for the first time, among them some recently appointed professors and junior researchers (Albrecht Beutel, Katrin Kogman-Appel, Astrid Reuter, Arnulf von Scheliha, Dorothea E Schulz, Johannes Schnocks, Michael Seewald, Sita Steckel, Fabian Wittreck). In addition, we have also with the legal scholar Nils Jansen appointed a new spokesperson for the Cluster, who, should funding be awarded, will take up his post in 2019. With this selection, we wish on the one hand to ensure the continuity of the Cluster's work, while on the other bringing more younger people into the Cluster. We regard the self-renewal that the Cluster has undergone in terms of personnel as a real achievement both procedurally and socially.

Sociology of Religion, Political Science, Religious Studies

A chair in the **Sociology of Religion** was set up at the University of Münster in 2008; this has a central integrative function for the Cluster in terms of both basic theoretical-methodological reflection and interdisciplinary mediation. The occupant of the chair, Detlef Pollack (PI), spokesperson for the Cluster since 2015, is a sociologist and Protestant theologian who combines the external and the internal perspective on religion. Since 2010, he has carried out several internationally respected representative population surveys on the perception and acceptance of religious plurality in a number of Eastern and Western European countries, as well as on the state of integration of Muslim immigrants in Germany. This will be the basis of future work, with the focus shifting to the view of the migrants themselves. Also involved in this work will be the political scientist Bernd Schlipphak and the social psychologists Mitja Back and Gerald Echterhoff (all Münster), as well as the internationally renowned researcher on migration, Ruud Koopmans (Berlin Social Science Centre). With Back and Echterhoff, **psychology** will be brought into the Cluster's range of disciplines for the first time, and we anticipate that this will give interdisciplinary momentum to the shared investigation of emotionality and religion.

An external perspective on religion in contemporary society is also taken by **political science**. There has been a chair in Political Science with a focus on religion at the University of Münster since 2006. The occupant of the chair, Ulrich Willems (PI), has long been concerned from both an empirical and a normative perspective with the political and legal condition of culturally and religiously plural societies, including as a member of the Centre for Advanced Study "Constitution of Norms in Medical Ethics and Biopolitics" (2010-2018) (see 5.2.1(3)). The role of religion as a political resource is also investigated by Doris Fuchs (International Relations, University of Münster), and by the external cooperating partner Matthias Kortmann, who holds a professorship in "Religion and Politics" at the University of Dortmund.

Non-denominational **religious studies** are indispensable for an external perspective on religion. The German Council of Science and Humanities (*Wissenschaftsrat*) pointed in its "Recommendations for the further development of theologies and sciences related to religion at German universities" (2010) to the high social relevance of the discipline, and recommended that it undergo significant expansion in terms of personnel. There are currently two chairs in religious studies at the University of Münster, one located in the Faculty of Protestant Theology (Perry Schmidt-Leukel) and one in the Faculty of Catholic Theology (Annette Wilke). Both professors have long been involved in the Cluster, and will continue to contribute their expertise on Buddhism, Hinduism and interreligious dialogue. Religious studies with a clear orientation towards the cultural and social sciences will be represented in the Cluster by Astrid Reuter (PI). In addition, a major institution for religious studies in the region will be brought into the Cluster with the inclusion of the Centre for Religious Studies (CERES), headed by Volkhard

Krech (Ruhr-University Bochum). Several members of CERES will participate in the work of the Cluster with their own projects on transcultural entanglement (Christian Frevel, Maren Freudenberg, Patrick Krüger, Levent Tezcan), thereby building on the already successful cooperation between the Cluster and CERES.

The **Centre for Religion and Modernity** (CRM) was founded in 2012 as a permanent institutional platform that would foster cooperation between those researchers on religion at the University of Münster who focus on the present day. Its executive coordinator is Astrid Reuter, and, with Detlef Pollack, Ulrich Willems, Thomas Großbölting and Regina Grundmann, there are a further four PIs on the executive board.

Christian Theologies

One of the Cluster's strengths has always been its inclusion not only of disciplines that look at religious phenomena from the outside, but also those that take a perspective internal to religion. The theologies (Protestant, Catholic, Christian Orthodox, Islamic) will be given an even greater role in the future, since we now wish to focus on the intrinsic motivational power of religion. We have therefore used the selection of PIs to increase the weight of theological research in the Cluster.

Christian theologies have always had a very prominent place at the University of Münster. The Faculty of Protestant Theology is one of the most important and largest in Germany. The Faculty of Catholic Theology is one of the most prestigious, largest and influential Catholic faculties in the world – we need only point here to its importance for the development of Latin American liberation theology. In addition, Münster has one of the very few professorships in Germany in **Orthodox Theology** (Assad Elias Kattan).

The internationally renowned Catholic church historian and Leibniz Prize winner Hubert Wolf (PI) has been at the core of the Cluster from its very beginnings. In view to the next funding period, he has initiated a Cluster working group on the digital edition of canonical writings (see 3.4.3(2)). We have also recently chosen Michael Seewald as PI, who was appointed to the University of Münster in 2016; as occupant of the chair in Catholic Dogmatics and Doctrinal History, Seewald is concerned with the tense relationship between theological doctrine and lived religiosity. In addition, Johannes Schnocks (PI) has been brought in from **Catholic Theology** to work in the field of Old Testament exegesis; Schnocks has already worked productively with Reinhard Achenbach from the Faculty of Protestant Theology. Finally, with the recruitment of Clemens Leonhard, we have also succeeded in including Catholic liturgical scholarship.

Protestant Theology also has a high profile in the Cluster with the appointment of new PIs. On the one hand, with Albrecht Beutel, who is a renowned expert in Protestant church history with a special focus on the Enlightenment and neology, and editor of the critical edition of

Spalding's work. And, on the other, with Arnulf von Scheliha (PI), professor of Ethics and Related Social Sciences, who is concerned primarily with issues to do with interreligious hermeneutics, religious policy, and Christian peace and social ethics. In addition, Reinhard Achenbach, professor of Old Testament, Lutz Doering, professor of New Testament and director of the *Institutum Judaicum Delitzschianum*, and Holger Strutwolf, director of the Institute for New Testament Textual Research (INTF), are involved with their own projects in the work of the Cluster. The INTF is the world's leading research institute for New Testament textual research, and edits the two main editions of the Greek New Testament, the "Nestle-Aland" (28th edition in 2013) and the "United Bible Societies Greek New Testament" (GNT, 5th edition in 2014).

Islamic Theology and Islamic Studies

With funds from the federal government and the state of North Rhine-Westphalia, the University of Münster established in 2010 the Centre for **Islamic Theology** (CIT) (see 5.2.1). This was of great importance for the Cluster, allowing us to widen our perspective for interreligious cooperation and considerably strengthen theological disciplines in the Cluster. Its director is Mouhanad Khorchide (PI), professor in Islamic Religious Education and one of the leading spokespeople for Muslim-Christian dialogue in German-speaking countries. CIT is closely entwined with the Cluster in terms of personnel. Khorchide, as director of CIT, is also PI in the Cluster, while other members of CIT are also involved in research projects in the Cluster. For example, Dina El-Omari is concerned with feminist traditions in Islam, while the Islamic scholar Angelika Neuwirth, editor of the *Corpus Coranicum* (Humboldt-Universität Berlin), has been brought into the work of the Cluster as an external cooperating partner for issues to do with the exegesis and editing of the Quran.

Of central importance for the Cluster is, besides Islamic theology, the Institute of **Arabic and Islamic Studies** at the University of Münster. It consisted until 2008 of only one professorship, whose occupant, Thomas Bauer, has been strongly involved in the Cluster as PI from the beginning. In 2013, Bauer was awarded the Leibniz Prize for his pioneering work on Islam as a "culture of ambiguity". The Cluster's founding also allowed the expansion of Islamic Studies in 2008 to include a W3 professorship in Islamic History (Marco Schöller) and a W2 professorship in Islamic Law (Norbert Oberauer).

The focus of the Institute of Arabic and Islamic Studies is primarily Arabic history and culture in the premodern era. A new research focus on **modern Islam**, as well as on issues of migration and integration, will be added in the future, with two new professorships (one in the "Social-scientific study of Islam in the Europe of the 20th and 21st century", and one in "Education and

migration”) having been announced in the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Münster; the appointment process for both posts is already underway (as of January 2018; see 5.2.2(1)).

The problems posed by Muslim migration and the reception of Muslims by European societies with a Christian majority have also occupied the Cluster in the past (see Pollack’s international surveys mentioned above, and the publications of Matthias Hoesch). We can build on this work. And we can also cooperate with a number of recognized experts in the region who deal, for example, with issues of integrating young Muslims into German society and with the challenges facing the education system: with the Islamic scholar, sociologist and migration researcher Levent Tezcan of CERES (Bochum); with Haci Halil Uslucan, professor of Educational Psychology and director of the Centre for Turkish Studies and Integration at the University (ZfTI) of Duisburg-Essen; and with Peter Schreiner, director of the Comenius Institute for Educational Studies in Münster.

Jewish Studies

Up until 2008, Jewish Studies was represented by only one professorship in New Testament History at the Faculty of Protestant Theology. To establish Jewish Studies as a non-denominational discipline in cultural studies, the University of Münster established as part of the Cluster its first professorship in Jewish Studies in 2009. Its occupant, Regina Grundmann (PI), focuses in her research on Rabbinic Judaism and on Jewish intellectual and cultural history. We succeeded in 2015 in acquiring an Alexander von Humboldt professorship for Katrin Kogman-Appel (PI), who focuses in particular on Sephardic Judaism and the Jewish art and culture of the Middle Ages. It was then possible on this basis to establish an Institute for Jewish Studies in the Faculty of Philology, and to recruit several postdocs to further strengthen Jewish Studies in the Cluster. The art historian Débora Marques de Matos, for example, and the mediaevalist Wolfram Drews (PI) also investigate Jewish-Christian-Islamic processes of entanglement in the Middle Ages. In addition, research on ancient Judaism is also conducted within the framework of theological studies on the Old and New Testament (Johannes Schnocks, Clemens Leonhard, Reinhard Achenbach, Lutz Doering, Rüdiger Schmitt, Holger Strutwolf).

Historical Studies

A central concern of the Cluster since its beginnings has been to examine the relationship between religion and politics in its deep historical dimension. The medieval historian Gerd Althoff and the early-modern historian Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger (PI) were among the founders of the Cluster and were its spokespeople in the first and second phase. They were able to build on a long tradition of Collaborative Research Centres (CRCs) in history that focused initially on the history of the European Middle Ages, but that then gradually widened its focus (CRC 7,

CRC 231, CRC 365, CRC 496, and most recently CRC 1150, “Cultures of Decision-Making”). All three major epochs are now represented by PIs in the Cluster.

Antiquity is represented by Johannes Hahn (PI), who is a specialist in the religious diversity of late antiquity. In addition, with Peter Funke, senior professor in Greek history, Engelbert Winter, member of the *Asia Minor* research unit, and Achim Lichtenberger, classical archaeologist, we now have three experts in the Eastern Mediterranean in pre- and post-Christian times involved through projects in the Cluster. With Egyptology, which has a prominent profile through Angelika Lohwasser’s role as PI, we include an ancient oriental civilization whose divine kingship represents a significant comparative case for Judaism, Christianity and Islam. An institutional basis for all this research is provided by the **Centre for Eastern Mediterranean Studies** (GKM).

Medieval history is represented by Wolfram Drews (PI), an expert in transcultural Jewish-Christian-Islamic entanglements, and by Sita Steckel (PI), a specialist in the history of education and in particular of universities in the Christian Middle Ages. Also involved with projects in the Cluster are Gerd Althoff as a senior professor, Jan Keupp as an expert in the material culture of the Middle Ages, and Michael Grünbart as a Byzantinist. The history of the **early-modern period** is mainly represented by Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger (PI, spokesperson for the Cluster and Leibniz Prize winner of 2004), who is concerned with the transcultural contact zone between the Habsburg and Ottoman empires, and who also works with Jan Hennings and Nadia Al Bagdadi of the Central European University in Budapest. Drews and Stollberg-Rilinger are directors of the **Centre for Medieval and Early Modern Studies** (CMF), the institutional platform for those disciplines at the University of Münster that are devoted to this major epoch. Also involved in this area are Iris Fleßenkämper and André Krischer, two experts in the early-modern history of law.

Finally, **recent and contemporary history** is represented by Thomas Großbölting as PI. Großbölting has long dealt with the history of the Christian denominations in Germany from the 19th century to the present day. Also involved with projects in the Cluster are Olaf Blaschke and Klaus Große Kracht, two further experienced religious historians of the 19th and 20th century. Ulrich Pfister, spokesperson for the CRC “Cultures of Decision-Making”, contributes an economic-historical perspective on religion, supported by cooperating partner Jens Köhrsen (Centre for Religion, Economy and Politics in Basel), who is also an expert on the relationship between religion and economics with a focus on Latin America.

One geographical focus in terms of recent history is the two **Americas** and their transatlantic entanglements. Latin American history is represented by Silke Hensel as PI; added to this is a postdoctoral project by Javier Ramón Soláns. Religious-historical relations between North America and Europe are dealt with by Heike Bungert, expert on German migration to America, and Maren Freudenberg (CERES), who is investigating the US evangelical mission in Europe.

The Centre for Religion and Modernity (CRM) provides an institutional platform for contemporary historians and scholars in law, politics and the social sciences at the University of Münster; this platform has close links to the Cluster.

The **history of Eastern Europe and Orthodox Christianity** will be developed to provide a further geographical focus. Research on religion in Eastern Europe is currently represented at the University of Münster by professorships in East European History (Eduard Mühle), Byzantine Studies (Michael Grünbart), Eastern Church Studies (Thomas Bremer), and Orthodox Theology (Assaad Elias Kattan). There will also be a new chair in “Orthodox Christianity in the 19th-21st century” (see 5.2.2(1)). Also involved as a senior professor with a project in the Cluster is the representative of Slavic Studies, Alfred Sproede, whose successor will be announced shortly.

Ethnology

With the newly appointed **ethnologist** and Africa expert Dorothea E Schulz as PI, contemporary **North and East Africa** will play a prominent role in the Cluster’s research, and will be expanded to become a new geographical focus in the coming years. This reflects the increasing importance of this continent, while at the same time revitalizing an interrupted tradition of research at the University of Münster.

Legal Studies

The University of Münster has a focus, unique in Germany, on the historical, philosophical, theoretical, and constitutional foundations of law and religion. This focus has been widened even further recently by early new appointments and reallocations. Legal scholars contribute significantly to the profile of the Cluster, dealing as they do with both historical and contemporary issues, and empirical and normative questions. Legal history is represented in the Cluster primarily by Nils Jansen (PI, intended spokesperson for the Cluster), an internationally renowned specialist in the premodern relationship between law and religion in late scholasticism, and Fabian Wittreck (PI), one of the few German specialists in Oriental church law, as well as by Peter Oestmann, a leading expert on medieval and early-modern German legal history, and Sebastian Lohsse, an expert on medieval Roman law and the tensions between legistics and canonistics. Public law and constitutional law concerning religion are represented by Hinnerk Wißmann and the recently appointed Oliver Lepsius. The legal philosopher Thomas Gutmann (PI), spokesperson for many years for the Centre for Advanced Study “The Justification of Norms in Medical Ethics and Biopolitics” (see 5.2.1(3)), is concerned with fundamental normative questions concerning the relationship between religion and politics in the modern period. Added to this are the Islamic scholar Norbert Oberauer, one of the few specialists in Islamic law in Germany, and the private-law scholar Matthias Casper, a specialist in Islamic finance.

Literary Studies and Art History

Literary studies and art history are of fundamental importance for investigating the medial – written, pictorial, and theatrical – forms of religious communication. It is for this reason that, besides the Arabic scholar Thomas Bauer and the art historian Katrin Kogman-Appel, the scholar of German literature Martina Wagner-Egelhaaf also belongs to the core group of PIs. Also participating in the work of the Cluster with further projects are the Latinist Alexander Arweiler, the Old German scholar Bruno Quast, the scholar of modern German literature Christian Sieg, the romance-languages scholars Pia Doering and Karin Westerwelle, and the art historians Eva Bettina Krems and Jens Niebaum.

Philosophy

Finally, philosophy not only addresses the historical manifestations of criticism of religion and apologetics, but also reflects on fundamental normative questions regarding the relationship between religion and politics. The legal and social philosopher Michael Quante, renowned expert on German idealism, belongs to the group of PIs. Also involved in the Cluster through other projects are Quante's predecessor Ludwig Siep as senior professor and Kurt Bayertz, as well as the postdoctoral researchers Matthias Hoesch and Amir Mosehni, who address fundamental ethical issues around migration and religious diversity.

3.4 Detailed description of the research programme

The Cluster's research programme is highly integrated. Intensive research collaborations and tried-and-tested forms of cooperation have emerged during the ten years of the Cluster, with many of our colleagues intending to carry them on in the future. To generate new research areas and research questions, we held a two-stage Ideas Contest in 2017; this was open to the entire university, and members of all the humanities and social sciences faculties at the University of Münster were able to participate. In total, about 130 ideas were submitted in the first round, of which about 90 made it into the second round. Of these, 50 projects were selected according to disciplinary criteria, but also according to the criterion of coherence with our research programme, and awarded a minimum funding period of four years; some of these are presented below, with a brief account of how they relate to the research programme.

Although the programme of work over the next four years has thereby taken a firm shape already, it is important for us to ensure a high degree of flexibility for future work and to build a structure that opens up space for new ideas and personnel. To ensure that the Cluster continues its process of self-renewal, we intend to introduce four measures:

- Temporary relationships of cooperation such as the Research Clouds mentioned above; after a certain time, these dissolve and give way to new working relationships.

- Seed money to develop new projects. Along with a new Ideas Contest, this form of work will also help to reduce a gap between members of the Cluster and the faculties of the University, and to integrate the Cluster even more closely into university structures.
- Cooperation to develop new ideas with academic partners regionally, nationally and internationally.
- Implementation of a new University-wide Ideas Contest after three years, to be held in the middle of the funding phase.

3.4.1 Fields of research

(1) Transcultural entanglement and disentanglement

Participating PIs: Thomas Bauer (Islamic Studies), Wolfram Drews (Medieval History), Johannes Hahn (Ancient History), Silke Hensel (Non-European History), Katrin Kogman-Appel (Jewish Studies), Angelika Lohwasser (Egyptology), Martina Wagner-Egelhaaf (Modern German Literature)

Other members of the University involved (selection): Lutz Doering (Protestant Theology), Iris Fleßenkämper (Early Modern History), Michael Grünbart (Byzantine Studies), Achim Lichtenberger (Archaeology), Sarah Demmrich (Sociology), Javier Ramon Solans (Modern History), Engelbert Winter (Ancient History/Asia Minor)

Coordinators: Wolfram Drews (PI/ Medieval History), Silke Hensel (PI/ Non-European History), Angelika Lohwasser (PI/ Egyptology)

State of research. The concept of transcultural entanglement emerged as a result of post-colonial studies and has experienced an upswing in recent years in relation to discussions in the humanities and social sciences on globalization and global history (Welsch 1994/95; Borgolte/Schneidmüller 2010; Conrad/Randeria 2002). Building on observations made in different individual disciplines and sometimes under different names (for example, in literary and art history on the aesthetics of reception and on translation theories), this approach has now gained a foothold in many disciplines, such as anthropology, history (including legal history), sociology, the philologies and theologies. It is now applied to different regions in the world, such as China, Latin America, the Mediterranean and Eastern Europe, as well as to different epochs. Specific to studies on intercultural entanglement is that they do not start from one-dimensional and linear processes of transfer that are usually associated with terms such as influence, dissemination, diffusion, or reception. Instead, they focus on network-like entanglements that are characterized by mutual interaction, multidirectional processes and countercurrents, which always create something new, a third entity.

Cultural spaces are therefore conceived not as unambiguously definable units, but as relational constructions that emerge only in interaction with other social spaces (Morley/Robins 1995: 87). They are projections of meaning and repertoires of patterns of perception, thought and action; they function as ideal resources that can be used in the face of diverging political, economic and social interests in quite different ways (Swidler 1986). The gaze must therefore be directed to discursive connections, allusions, quotations, blurred edges, smooth transitions, and hybrid formations. But it would also be wrong to ignore the material anchoring of cultural forms of meaning and their territorial connection, as expressed, for example, in the religious culture of remembrance (sacred places, times and objects).

Preparatory work. This concept of cultural space can be used in the work of the Cluster, which has already dealt intensively in the past with transcultural and transreligious relationships of entanglement as well as with reciprocal processes of interaction and reception, and has always emphasized the significance of culturally constituted perceptions and interpretations. We have paid special attention in our work so far to the reciprocity of processes of entanglement, which must be presented not as a transfer of cultural ideas, symbols, rites and social forms to the other side, but as interactions in which both sides involved always change. Thus, the history of Christian-Jewish relations in the first three centuries after Christ, a history riven by sharp mutual polemics, cannot be written as a one-sided history of transfer; rather, it is more appropriate to interpret the history as growing from a common Judeo-Christian repertoire of culture that both sides drew upon, albeit polemically (Löhr 2015; Doering 2010; see Boyarin 2004). A similar approach is also helpful as far as the Quran is concerned. The traditional Islamic depiction of history presents the pre-Islamic period as a period of “ignorance” (*ḡāhiliyya*). Yet, it seems much more appropriate to understand the Quran as a product of Mediterranean late antiquity, as a product of complex processes of entanglement in a multireligious and multicultural context on the periphery of the late-antique empires of Byzantium and Persia (Khorchide 2018). Further examples of previous work in the Cluster on mutual processes of entanglement are the reception of Hindu concepts in the West, and of Western concepts in Hinduism (Wilke 2015), the transfer of relics between Eastern and Western Christianity (Grünbart 2015), and complex migration processes between India and South Africa (Koch 2016).

New goals. The Cluster intends in its new research programme to approach the field of research from two main perspectives.

1) On the one hand, we raise the question of how and to what extent transcultural and transreligious entanglements contribute to the *capacity of religion to renew itself and to mobilize people*. This question arises not only from our overarching concern to explain the active role of religion in the social and political conflicts of the past and present, but also from our previous observation that transcultural processes of interaction often trigger a particular dynamic. We need only think here of the “classical” epoch of ancient Greece, or of the upswing of philosophy,

the natural sciences, architecture, medicine, mathematics, and poetics in the period of Abbasid rule from the 8th to the 13th century, or even of the symbiotic culture of the Sephardic Jews in medieval al-Andalus. Without the entanglement of different cultural traditions, without their reciprocal reception and spiritual-practical appropriation, the intellectual, social and political dynamics of these cultural epochs would be unimaginable. We therefore wish to examine the extent to which the innovativeness, the ability to mobilize, and the vitality of religion can be understood and explained as resulting from such transcultural entanglements.

2) On the other hand, it is also our concern to focus in the future on processes of cultural *disentanglement*. This focus arises directly from the insight that transcultural entanglements are not to be understood as something imposed from above, but instead occur as partial take-overs, as reinterpretations and transformations, and must therefore also be seen as processes of partial rejection and resistance (and of forgetting). What is interesting here are under what conditions tendencies of openness and appropriation dominate; under what conditions, tendencies of repulsion and demarcation (and also simply of forgetting); and under what conditions may one tendency turn into the other. But also interesting are the different forms of mixing between entanglement and disentanglement.

Despite justifiable criticism of their approaches, we follow Edward Said (1978), Dipesh Chakrabarty (2000), Talal Asad (2003), Shalini Randeria (Conrad/Randeria 2002) and other representatives of postcolonial studies, and assume that the tense relations of appropriation, subjugation, resistance, adaptation and self-assertion are influenced above all by cultural, political and economic relations of dominance. We can only understand the ambivalent dialectic between rapprochement and demarcation, between appropriation and self-assertion, if we take account of the respective relations of power and supremacy, but also of the different forms of their legitimacy and acceptance (see also our definition of politics above, p. 15f.). Analyzing transcultural relationships of entanglement and disentanglement must therefore always consider material, political, economic, and military power relations, feelings of superiority and inferiority, and struggles for recognition that ensue. Transcultural and transreligious relationships of entanglement and disentanglement can indeed not be understood according to the model of “sender” and “receiver” with its inherent hierarchy; rather, power is a social relationship in which even those who seem powerless can nonetheless always exert a certain power (Michel Foucault). That is why it is so important to pay particular attention to the ambivalent interplay of entanglement and disentanglement, to ironic acts of reception, to parasitic attachments, disparaging homages, imitative misrepresentations, to hybrids and syncretisms (Bhabha 1994). It is here that the struggles around superiority and inferiority, dominance and subjugation, are manifested; struggles that lie behind the processes of entanglement and disentanglement.

Programme of work. The field of research “Transcultural entanglement and disentanglement” encompasses broad cultural spaces and spans long historical periods. However, despite the diversity of the objects of study, the projects converge on the central question of what gives rise to the dynamics emanating from religion. What role in explaining these dynamics is played by transcultural densifications? What role, by cultural disentanglements? What role, by the complex relationships with the respective relations of power and supremacy? And which are the effects of the different ratios of mixing between demarcation and appropriation? The projects in this field of research reconstruct the routes and channels used by religious interaction; they identify dense contact zones and crossroads (Cooper 2005); but they also seek out barriers, breaks in contact, constrictions of interaction, and gatekeepers. They ask which agents and carriers promote or inhibit the interaction, which place they take on the social ladder, which media (texts, narratives, cult objects, symbols, pictures) and which mass media representations (literature, art, television, radio, internet) they employ. The projects analyze the relationship between religious practices, discourses and identities on the one hand, and the political-legal system on the other, as well as the complex relationships between local elites and political empires, etc. All these different research questions serve to show the *influence that entanglements and disentanglements have on religious dynamics*, and how these dynamics in turn influence those entanglements and disentanglements. The different projects rest here on the guiding assumption that *power relations* are manifested in the processes of transcultural entanglement and disentanglement, and that we cannot explain the mingling between reception and demarcation, the various ways that the contents of foreign traditions are adopted, added to, resisted, infiltrated, used, transformed, without referring to these relations of power.

How we actually intend to deal with these general questions in the individual research projects can be shown on the basis of a few examples. A large number of projects deal with transcultural entanglement and disentanglement in antiquity. Thus, the project of Angelika Lohwasser studies shifts of political power in the kingdom of Kush and in its relationship to Egypt in the Meroitic period (3rd century BCE to 3rd century CE), shifts related to the political weakening of Egypt, the increasing Hellenization of the region, and emerging contacts northwards to the Mediterranean. Lohwasser examines these shifts above all on the basis of the appearance in the kingdom of Kush of new deities, who were in a tense relationship with the Egyptian state gods. In some cases, the new deities overlapped with the Egyptian state gods; in some cases, they complemented them; in some cases, the Egyptian state gods appeared in specific local forms and were thus divested of their power. How local cult and imperial cult, Egyptian deities and Meroitic deities, religious symbols and symbols of political power related to each other; what mixed forms they entered into; what political interests were expressed in the religious

ideas – these are the main questions of this project, which is based on the study of archaeological sources, namely on relief, painting, and sculpture in the round, architecture, and on other objects of material culture.

The project of Lutz Doering aims to modify the widely held thesis that sees ancient Jewish apocalypticism as a phenomenon of social crisis by showing its involvement in the mythical worlds of Egyptian, Near Eastern, Hellenistic and Persian provenance. Early Jewish apocalypticism did not simply represent an “anti-Hellenistic resistance movement”, since many of its features cannot be appropriately described as resistance literature and instead show signs of hybridity and mimicry. Rather, Doering argues that early Jewish apocalypticism can only be understood through its participation in the Canaanite and Near-Eastern mythical world, and its particular and marginalizing appropriation. He raises the question of whether its particular significance for Jewish self-understanding and its long-term effect should not be explained to a significant degree by this richly associative and manifold broken relationship of entanglement. The project is to be carried out as a collaborative project with the Bible department/Mandel Institute of Jewish Studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (Director: Michael Segal), which has produced much relevant work on ancient Jewish apocalypticism.

The project pursued by Eduard Winter focuses on the transcultural function of condensed contact zones and junctions, and addresses the question of whether the Euphrates in northern Mesopotamia and northern Syria played more of a shielding or a connecting role in the interaction of religious ideas and practices between the 1st century BCE and the 3rd century CE. It links this question to power-political viewpoints, placing the study of the Euphrates as an interface of cultural interaction within the framework of the expansion of two great empires (Rome, Persia). Thus, Winter investigates how the local ideas of the gods were integrated into the imperial systems of symbols, and which forms of demarcation and self-assertion, of adaptation and inbetweenness, existed.

The latter question is also at the centre of the project led by Achim Lichtenberger, who deals with the stubbornly dynamic religious potential of self-confident Phoenician cities under Roman rule in the imperial era. Since the archaeological findings do not suffice, he uses coin findings. A coin from Tyros shows the Phoenician Heros Cadmus handing over the alphabet to the Greeks – an example of how the Greek dominant culture was in a way hijacked and defeated by its own means.

A further group of projects investigate the processes of entanglement and disentanglement in the medieval and early-modern period. In her project, which spans the period from the 8th to the 17th century, Katrin Kogman-Appel deals with the rededication of buildings on the Iberian peninsula, where Christians, Muslims and Jews lived side by side under constantly changing rule. The central question of this project is what forms of cultural appropriation were chosen when religious buildings changed their ownership, and what complex takeovers, hybrids and

disentanglements resulted. Long-term changes to material culture are also the focus of the project pursued by Michael Grünbart, who explores the exploitation of landscapes of death and memory (“deathscapes”) in situations of political conflict in the Mediterranean area during the Greek Middle Ages (300-1500), exploring how the organization of such “deathscapes” built up power and legitimacy, and how their destruction led in turn to the loss of authority. His project deals with conflicts over the culture of memory, i.e., over indivisible goods, by investigating the struggle for control over spaces and artefacts. Also in a long-term study, Wolfram Drews analyzes the recurrent changing discourses on purification used by Christians in the Spanish Middle Ages. A tendency towards demarcation and disentanglement in the 9th century was followed by an epoch when such tendencies are barely verifiable, and then by an epoch when discourses on purification and demarcation became dominant again. In doing so, Drews raises the question of which factors influenced the different tendencies in each epoch, and what significance feelings of threat, majority relations, and possibilities of contact had here.

A third group of projects focus on the processes of disentanglement and entanglement between Europe, the USA and Latin America in the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries. Silke Hensel examines the role of the Catholic clergy in the process of separating Mexico from Spain, its ambivalent involvement in the independence movement, and its simultaneous ties to the old Spanish regime in the mid-19th century. Francisco Javier Ramón Solans explores the attempt to found an independent Catholic Church in Latin America. How did this attempt develop its internal dynamic through the separation from Spain, the concomitant establishment of a close relationship to Rome, and the simultaneous demarcation from the USA, which was defined as Protestant? What turned in the course of a century this once conservative attempt into a vehicle for liberation theology and movements for political reform in Latin America, eventually even giving rise to a socially engaged pope?

(2) Religious diversity and legal-political unity

Participating PIs: Abrecht Beutel (Protestant Theology), Thomas Großbölting (Modern and Contemporary History), Thomas Gutmann (Legal Studies), Nils Jansen (Civil Law), Detlef Pollack (Sociology of Religion), Astrid Reuter (Religious Studies), Arnulf von Scheliha (Protestant Theology), Dorothea Schulz (Anthropology), Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger (Early Modern History), Ulrich Willems (Political Theory), Fabian Wittreck (Legal Studies)

Other members of the University involved (selection): Mitja Back (Psychology), Gerald Echterhoff (Psychology), Christel Gärtner (Sociology), Oliver Lepsius (Legal Studies), Sebastian Lohsse (Legal History), Olaf Müller (Sociology of Religion), Norbert Oberauer (Islamic Studies), Peter Oestmann (Legal History), Joachim Renn (Sociology), Bernd Schlipphak (Political Science), Hinnerk Wißmann (Constitutional Law (pertaining to religion))

Coordinators: Nils Jansen (PI/ Civil Law), Ulrich Willems (PI/ Political Theory)

State of research. The thesis that the modern secular constitutional state has its roots in religion is one of the grand narratives of political philosophy and the history of law. It is a narrative that consists of two parts. First, the narrative describes the medieval organization of the church and its canon law as constitutive foundations for the emergence of the modern sovereign constitutional state. According to this narrative, Western Christianity built with the medieval church an organization that replaced medieval consensual and customary law with the divine sovereignty of papal legislative power, created the new system of canon law, and rationally constructed the ecclesiastical law through the form of written proceedings, stages of appeal, and the professionalization of judges. With its legal constitution, its bureaucratic structure, and its hierarchical centralism, the Roman church, so the narrative goes, became the model of the modern state. It is classic figures such as Carl Schmitt (1922) and Harold Berman (1983) who argue along these lines. In its second part, the grand narrative of legal philosophers describes the emergence of the modern state as a process of secularization (Böckenförde 2007). According to this view, the modern constitutional state established itself in Europe after the dissolution of religious unity and particularly in response to the religious wars of the 16th and 17th century, and was designed in such a way that it could function as a religiously neutral guarantor of peace between the divided denominations (Koselleck 1973). While the first part of the narrative emphasizes continuity between canon law and modern legal developments, or between Roman church and secular constitutional state, the second emphasizes their discontinuity and thus the process of differentiation between law and religion.

This narrative has since come under sustained challenge. Criticism is focused firstly on the fact that, at the end of the religious wars in Spain, England and France, i.e., in the most powerful nation states of Europe, but also in Germany, it was not the ideologically neutral and tolerant state that was left standing, but the alliance of state and denominational churches (Schilling 1988; Reinhard 1999). The secularization thesis accords at best with the major state theories of Bodin and Hobbes – but not with the political reality. On the other hand, doubt is also cast on whether the separation of church and state is a necessary or even sufficient condition for rule of law, tolerance and democracy (Casanova 2008: 68). This criticism leads to the discussion broadly conducted of what principles are needed to ensure the peaceful coexistence of different religious communities.

What interests researchers when they study the relationship between religious diversity and legal-political unity is the influence not only of religion on the emergence of legal-political systems, however, but also of legal systems and jurisdiction on religious life, with issues related to the present being the main focus in this branch of research (Fetzer/Soper 2005; Rath/Penninx/Groenendijk/Meyer 2001; de Galembert/Koenig 2014). Of particular importance here is

the question of what political and social effects are produced by case law, with the constitutional courts thereby becoming the focus of attention as religious-political actors. This research on the role of constitutional courts in democratic systems, which is an independent field of study in the Anglo-Saxon world (Hirschl 2004, 2010), has only gained little importance so far in European discussion (but see Stone Sweet 2000). Research is also focusing increasingly on the framing of nation-state regulation (including constitutional regulation) by means of international agreements on human or fundamental rights, and of the simultaneous establishment of an international jurisdiction, especially of the European Court of Human Rights (Vyver/Witte 1996; Brems 2003; Koenig 2008, 2015).

Work on the tense relationship between religious diversity and legal-political unity has become increasingly important in recent years in concrete policy fields, such as schools, the welfare system, the penal system, family law, and labour law (Beckford/Joly/Khosrokhavar 2005; Becci 2011; Büchler 2011; Alidadi/Foblets/Vrielink 2012), with this work also focusing in particular on the influence that the law has on religious life.

Preliminary work. The Cluster has already produced extensive preliminary work on the entrenchment of modern law in the discourses of canon law, late scholasticism, and early-modern natural law, as well as on the differentiation of religion, politics and law. To name but a few examples, Nils Jansen (2013, 2015) has dealt in several works with the influence of the late-scholastic school of Salamanca on modern legal developments, and with the entanglements and disentanglements between law and religion in the discourse of early-modern natural law. Working groups and conferences initiated by the Cluster have focused on the transition from the religious to the secular justification of state norms, exploring not least whether the emancipation of the sovereign state from religion should be understood as a danger to individual freedom. Several individual publications and anthologies have emerged from this field of study (Siep 2015; Gutmann *et al.* 2018). The volume *Contested Secularization* (Gabriel/Gärtner/Pollock 2014) conducted an epoch-by-epoch analysis to question from a historical perspective the thesis of the increasing differentiation between religion and politics, or religion and law.

The Cluster is also already in an ideal position to analyze the influence of legal and state norms on the religious domain. The North Rhine-Westphalia Graduate School “Regulating Religious Plurality in the Region” (see section 5.2.1(3) below), with 11 doctoral posts, has provided the study of this subject with a broad empirical basis. But the Cluster deals with this subject not only at the regional level, but also at the national and international level. For example, Astrid Reuter (2014) has dealt with legal conflicts such as the dispute over crucifixes at Bavarian schools, the wearing of a headscarf by Muslim teachers, and the introduction of ethics classes in Berlin and Brandenburg. Bijan Fateh-Moghadam (2012) has investigated the legal standardization of ritual circumcision and the conflict over the burka. Simone Sinn (2014) has examined the treatment of religious diversity in Indonesia. Frauke Drewes (2016) has studied the

social and political position of Muslims in China. Menno Preuschaft (2014) has analyzed the Saudi Arabian discourse on religious pluralism, which is influenced by identity constructions. Finally, Willems, Reuter and Gerster (2016) have provided an overview of systems regulating religious plurality in the past and present.

New goals. We wish to build on this preliminary work by meeting the challenges raised by current discussions. 1) First, we wish to examine the religious influences on the formation of legal-political systems in the tension between juridification and de-juridification. What influence have canonical texts and theological arguments had on the development of legal and political norm systems? This question, which is the chief interest of the research programme looking at the active role of religion in social conflicts and disputes, will be dealt with by comparing Islam and Christianity. What influence canon law has had on the development of modern contract law in Europe is well known (Decock 2013; Jansen 2013; Wittreck 2002). But when exactly did spiritual and secular law first differentiate, and how exactly did this occur? What we need to explain here in particular is why it was that, in the late-medieval interaction between experts of church law (canonists) and secular legal experts oriented to Roman law (legists), the essential thrust of innovation that transformed the European legal systems actually came from the canonists. We must look at how the idea of a binding contract with its religious connotations could become in the early-modern period the point of departure for political arguments and the normative foundation for secular theories of state and society, and how the idea of a universal law applicable to all human beings could become persuasive precisely at a time when church unity was dissolving with the confessionalization of Christianity. Furthermore, we must examine the role played by the great early-modern conceptions of natural law and the codification programmes of the Enlightenment period in the transition to positive law. And, finally, we must ask why it was that the end of natural law in the 20th century did not lead to the end of universalist discourses of law and justice. The task in determining the influence of religion in legal-political developments is therefore to refrain from narrating this process as a linear, teleological history of progress, and instead to question the often one-dimensional picture of the secular character of the modern constitutional state. It is important here not only to reconstruct this process at the level of the history of ideas, but also to relate it to institutional circumstances, social framework conditions and political opportunity structures, and to delineate it using actual legal and political practices. To avoid the unilinearity of previous myths of progress, we need to relate the *discourses* to *practices* and *institutional structures*.

However, we would only be partly performing the task of providing a more nuanced picture of the secular state and its religious roots if we did not also relate developments in the “West” to non-Western cultures, and relativize these developments accordingly. The narrative of progress in the West reads developments in other cultures from its own perspective, and therefore sees these developments only in terms of deficit. We use for comparison the world of classical

and post-classical Islam (12th-19th century). Yet, we do not examine the religious, legal, and political discourses found there primarily in terms of how far these discourses had a religious root and differentiated themselves in the course of time, and how far this differentiation functioned as a prerequisite for the rationalization of law, politics and the economy. Rather, we ask what significance religion actually had – possibly also beyond differentiation processes – in legal, political and economic discourses and practices. Again, we can only avoid one-sided causal attributions by contextualizing these discourses and practices.

2) The second question that interests us emerges directly from the first, since we also investigate here the dynamic potential of religion; this time, though, we do so with regard not to the formation of state institutions, norms and practices, but to the development of non-state rules. We wish to examine the religious character of non-state norms by looking at the normative binding effect of private-law contracts and trade agreements within minority religious communities. Members of religious communities can draw on common beliefs, shared ethics, and the reputation of members of a network in which people know one another personally to conclude contracts with each other without recourse to state law. The binding effect of the contract and its enforcement are based in this case on a shared religious lifeworld. How do religious minorities exert this binding effect, and what internal and external factors does this effect depend upon?

3) Finally, we look also at the influence of legal-political systems and regulations on religious diversity, and on the management of conflicts resulting from this diversity. To assess this highly relevant issue from a greater reflexive distance, we adopt a historical perspective. Legal-political systems and norms have throughout history influenced, transformed, suppressed and exploited religious forms of meaning and religious social forms in many ways, privileging some and deprivileging or even destroying others. Even if we are reversing the direction here by analyzing religion in its dependence on political rule and legal regulation, we are also interested in this case, too, not only in the question of how control of religious communities and their practices took place, but also in how the legal-political institutions and interventions were accepted, repelled, subverted and transformed by the religious groups. In this case, too, we therefore hold to our central question and deal with the dynamic power of religious communities, identities, imaginary worlds and practices, with their political and social resistance, and with their innovative power. But, even more than is usually the case, we do so here in terms of the political and legal framework conditions, which can be both limiting and enabling.

We therefore take a historical stance here with regard to the central question of how far religion can be used and exploited politically, how far it is an autonomous engine for the escalation or de-escalation of political conflicts, how far it can resist political and legal influences and avoid being used by them, how far it is only a medium for the playing out of political conflicts or makes itself the advocate of political interests and allies itself with them. But we also consider

contemporary problems, such as in the secular religious-political systems of Western Europe. Even under conditions of state neutrality, religious law exerts a considerable influence on the vitality of religious communities in terms of the variety of their organizational forms, practices and symbolic worlds. For example, under the conditions of a liberal constitutional law concerning religion, religious communities can constitute themselves as independent organizations, whereas such communities are suppressed in authoritarian states, as can be seen with the Alevi (Eißler 2010). How legal regulations affect the organizational structure of religious communities or the way that believers conduct their lives (headwear, holidays, nutrition); how far the constitutional protection of religious freedom leads to the formulation in religious terminology of general social demands for recognition, which flags up the group as religious in the first place; how legal norms transform religious semantics, identities and organizational forms – these are all important questions that we deal with in this field of research.

Programme of work. 1) Several projects in the history of law and the history of philosophy plan to develop a more nuanced view of the emergence of secular normative systems in Western Europe, of their religious origins and the separation of political and legal systems from religious discourses and formulas of legitimation. For example, Sebastian Lohsse traces the complex controversies between legistics and canon law in the 11th and 12th century, and asks himself the hitherto largely unexplored question of how exactly it was that the canonists brought about the legal innovations of this period. His initial assumption is that the power for innovation that the canonists had can only be explained by the interplay between the authority of ancient legal texts on the one hand, and practical needs, political interests and religious norms on the other. Peter Oestmann examines the differentiation of secular and clerical justice from the Middle Ages to the modern era, and asks why clerical jurisdiction was so much more successful in enforcing the law. His project is not concerned with the history of ideas, but instead focuses on judicial practices and their social effects. Nils Jansen explores in his similarly epoch-spanning project the question of how the ideas of the unity and truth of law have been detached from their religious roots, transformed into conceptions of natural law, and thereby positivized but not completely dissolved. Why could such ideas live on in the idea of universal human rights, despite the pluralistic tendencies towards positive law? In contrast to approaches that focus purely on the history of ideas, Jansen assumes that the respective social context formed an essential framework for discourses of justice.

Taking into account the social context is also central to the project carried out by Arnulf von Scheliha, who is interested in the political commitment of Protestant theologians in democratically elected parliaments, and thus examines the prehistory of the support given by Protestant churches to the ideal of democracy. What role did theological insights, such as the abandonment of the Reformation doctrine of authority, play in anticipating practices and ideas affirming

democracy; and how important were the political opportunity structures and political learning experiences of these theologians – these are the main questions of this project.

We consider it important to compare the effects of religious discourses on legal and political norms in the Western world on the one hand, and in the Islamic world of the classical and post-classical period on the other, and we wish to do so in such a way that Islam appears neither as a negative contrast case, and nor as a positive ideal. We therefore do not assume that the differentiation between religion and law, politics, economics, medicine, and art is the prerequisite for processes of rationalization or for gains in efficiency. Rather, it is important for us that we look at the significance of religious discourses (for legitimating political rule, for example), or at the effects of *sharia* (on economic activity, for instance) without assuming that differentiation is necessary. Empirical knowledge of Islamic cultures in the West is scarce; but stereotypes that feed on Western dichotomies are plentiful.

The project carried out by Thomas Bauer studies Sunni ideas of rule in the 12th century by looking at chancery writings and poems on the ruler that were popular at the time. His research so far has already shown that religion in the epoch of the Mamluk sultanate of the 13th and 14th century played a surprisingly minor role in the legitimation of rule. That might have been very different in the religiously charged time of the conflicts between Sunnis and Shiites in the 12th century. Taking into account the political conditions of the time, this project therefore deals with the historically varying role of religion in the political discourses of the 12th to 14th century; at the same time, it also addresses the social effectiveness of the special emotional appeal of the poetic form used by many of these discourses. Norbert Oberauer's project focuses on the interim position that Islamic economic and contract law inhabited between religion and economics from the 14th to the 19th century, and attempts to work out by means of the ban on *gharar* (speculation) the actual effects that this interim position had on economic activity.

2) As far as the influence of religious networks on the formation of non-state contracts is concerned, we need only refer here to the project carried out by Ulrich Pfister. Comparing state-supported long-distance trade and trade conducted by religious minorities, Pfister examines the extent to which the binding effect of contracts in their multiplexed networks is based on religiously grounded trust, business rationality, personal familiarity, ease of control and opportunity of sanction, or obligations related to ethnicity and kinship.

3) Several projects dealing with Eastern Europe address the religious-political framing of religious diversity. Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger's project looks at the relationship between central rule and religious diversity in the area of the Habsburg military border to the Ottoman Empire, which extended in the 18th century from Croatia to Transylvania. In this cultural contact zone, in which, besides Catholics, also Lutherans, Reformed Protestants, Jews, Muslims, Greek Orthodox and Greek Catholic Christians lived, the Habsburg monarchy tried in vain to enforce religious homogeneity with its policy of Catholic confessionalization. The project investigates

the political means used, how the Habsburgs interacted with other political powers, and how the population reacted to the attempts at homogenization – with indifference, dissimulation, conversion, emigration, passive resistance, or rebellion. But the project also investigates how these reactions were shaped by religious affiliation in relation to ethnic origin, military status, social situation, and gender. At the heart of Fabian Wittreck's investigation is the collection and analysis of all constitutional documents and draft constitutions in majority Orthodox states since 1800; moreover, Wittreck will reconstruct the attitude of selected Eastern Orthodox churches to religious diversity, to the right to religious freedom, and to democracy. The central questions here are the extent to which the normative constitutional texts and the theologically inspired positions of the Orthodox churches diverge from one another, and how far the latter approximate to, or actually close themselves off from, ideas of religious plurality. These questions are pursued in depth with regard not to Russia (which has already been researched comparatively well), but to Bulgaria. The relationship between ideals of political unity and religious identity is also the subject of Olaf Müller's project, which, however, adopts the perspective not of state and church organizations, but of the population. In a comparative secondary analysis of representative population surveys, Müller looks at the considerable differences between the countries of Central and Eastern Europe when it comes to supporting church authority. What he seeks to explain is the discrepancy between the nationalistic and interventionist religious policies of many churches on the one hand, and the religious-political ideas of order held by the populations in favour of the separation of church and state on the other.

In addition, in order to strengthen its Eastern European research on religion, the Cluster is using seed money to help develop new projects that address the relationship between religious diversity and legal-political norms of unity in Russia, the Ukraine and Greece. The projects will focus on the extent to which the symbiosis of church and state that characterizes Orthodoxy has been partially dissolved in these countries, and how attitudes to national unity and religious diversity have changed. Hans-Peter Großhans, Faculty of Protestant Theology, and Liliya Bereshnaya, Eastern European History, will assume responsibility for leading these projects. Contributions to this area are also expected from the professorship for "Orthodox Christianity in the 19th to 21st Century" which will be established.

The influence of religious-political norms on religious diversity is also examined in relation to the situation in Western Europe. The question of how religion was used and exploited during the Enlightenment to stabilize the political order is the focus of attention of Albrecht Beutel's project. Thomas Großbölting's project focuses on the extent to which the National Socialist regime succeeded in anchoring its worldview in the population, how strong the resistance of the majority Christian population was, and which beliefs were actually dominant among this population. Finally, Oliver Lepsius examines the effects that decisions made by the German Federal Constitutional Court in cases of religious conflict (headscarf, crucifix, ban on dancing

on Good Friday) have on how these conflicts are dealt with in social practice. This project connects up with international research on the role of constitutional courts in democratic systems. Cooperation with the methodological platform for quantitative and qualitative social research has already been agreed so as to give appropriate support to this somewhat risky project of impact research.

(3) Criticism of religion and apologetics

Participating PIs: Regina Grundmann (Jewish Studies), Mouhanad Khorchide (Islamic Theology), Michael Quante (Philosophy), Johannes Schnocks (Catholic Theology), Michael Seewald (Catholic Theology), Sita Steckel (Medieval History), Hubert Wolf (Catholic Theology)

Other members of the University involved (selection): Pia Doering (Romance Studies), Dina El-Omari (Islamic Theology), André Krischer (Early Modern History), Clemens Leonhard (Catholic Theology), Haila Manteghi-Amin (Catholic Theology), Holger Strutwolf (Protestant Theology)

Coordinators: Regina Grundmann (PI/ Jewish Studies), Sita Steckel (PI/ Medieval History)

State of research. Criticism of religion is a widely undervalued issue. However, like its very opposite (apologetics), it is of far-reaching significance for processes of religious change, and in particular for the capacity of religions to renew themselves. Intrareligious criticism of religion often tends to mask its own innovativeness and to present itself as a rediscovery of a buried tradition. Nonetheless, it is precisely how a religion deals with religious criticism that largely determines its ability to change. To give one example: by accepting religious freedom, the Second Vatican Council was responsible for perhaps one of the most significant revolutions in the history of the Catholic Church; at the same time, however, the Council Fathers insisted that the Church had always preached nothing but religious freedom (Gabriel/Spieß/Winkler 2016). Research has not yet adequately dealt with the special dynamics that criticism of religion gives rise to, dynamics that are based on the dialectic between innovation and tradition. The analytical philosophy of religion, which has made considerable progress in recent decades with its studies of the specific nature of religious language, is interested above all in critically discussing the rationality of doctrines. But it largely neglects the historical situation of the theological doctrines that it investigates. In contrast, Charles Taylor has advanced the historical analysis of secular thought with his magnum opus *A Secular Age* (2007). Taking an historically informed approach that combines political science, theology and philosophy, he has identified the constitutive role that religious argumentations play in the development of the *secular frame* that characterizes modernity.

Historical analyses of the criticism of religion and atheism have been carried out for the medieval period by, for example, Schwerhoff (2005) and Weltecke (2010). The age of confession-alization has been investigated in interdisciplinary studies from theology, history and literary studies, which have looked at the forms and strategies of polemics internal to Christianity (Oelke 1992; Jürgens/Weller 2013). The significance of the Enlightenment criticism of religion in the emergence of modernity has been discussed particularly intensively in the context of Jonathan Israel's model of "radical enlightenment" (Israel 2002). All of this raises the question of the potential that existed for criticism of religion in the premodern period in comparison to the modern period.

Besides the intrareligious criticism of religion, we also take as our object of research interreligious criticism. The critical and polemical discussion of Islam among Christians is not new, but, as historical research has shown (Kaufmann 2008; Klein/Platow 2008), has existed throughout history.

The Cluster can build on all these scattered studies on the criticism of religion. However, it also intends to go far beyond the current state of research, in terms both of the systematic focus on leading research questions, and the interdisciplinary treatment of the issue and its deep historical analysis.

Preparatory work. To address the issue, the Cluster can build on some work already carried out. Publications on the criticism of religion are available from the perspective of the philosophy of religion, theology, Jewish studies, literary studies, and history. Gerd Althoff (2013), for example, has dealt with the papal legitimacy of the use of violence in the High Middle Ages and the contemporary reaction to it. What he found is that there was already vehement criticism of the Pope's doctrines of violence in this period, with critics pointing to the New Testament's love of peace, of one's neighbour, and of one's enemy to call for virtues such as humility, meekness and kindness. Regina Grundmann and Assaad Elias Kattan (2015) have shown how significant a role criticism could already play in late antiquity and in the Middle Ages in other religious traditions, too. Post-Hegelian criticism of religion is studied by Michael Quante and Amir Mohseni (2015). Cluster members have also already dealt with the functions and effects of criticism of religion – for example, the literature scholar Christian Sieg (2014), who has studied the birth of the politically committed model of authorship from the spirit of criticism of religion.

New goals. The goals pursued in the field of research "Criticism of religion and apologetics" are to structure the research on the basis of key questions; to strengthen the interdisciplinary approach to the theme; to map out the strategies, types and medial forms of criticism of religion; to make criticism of religion the object of research not only in Christianity, but also in Judaism and Islam; to investigate even more intensively than before the social conditions that enable criticism of religion; to examine its functions and effects; and to address the interrelations between criticism and apologetics.

The Cluster has four strategies to achieve these goals.

1) A strategy of *integration*. In order to structure the analysis of forms of criticism of religion, we propose the distinction between intra-, inter- and extrareligious criticism of religion. In terms of the intrareligious criticism of religion, we could think, for example, of the contemporary criticism voiced by lay organizations within the Catholic Church; in terms of interreligious criticism, of the long tradition of anti-Jewish polemics on the part of Christians; and, in terms of extrareligious criticism, of the fundamental atheistic criticism of religion since the Enlightenment of the 18th century. Unlike present research, which often examines these different forms of criticism separately, the Cluster brings them together, relates one to the other, and analyzes them comparatively. Such *integration* also makes sense insofar as intra-, inter- and extrareligious criticism of religion often overlap and influence one another – as in the Enlightenment, when Protestant and Catholic clergy criticized magical practices of piety just as much as did materialistic philosophers. In doing so, the Cluster aims to build on the interdisciplinary orientation of research on intra-Christian polemics in the Reformation and post-Reformation period, and to strengthen the interdisciplinary approach to the subject. The medial diversity of statements critical of religion – from philosophical tracts and theological treatises, through satirical poems, ballads, comedies, and parodies, up to caricatures, blogs and videos – make an interdisciplinary approach almost inevitable.

2) The Cluster pursues an approach that investigates criticism of religion not only according to the history of ideas by attending to the content and sources of such criticism, but also in terms of its *social standing* and the *social and medial conditions of its possibility*. In doing so, we consider whether criticism of religion holds a dominant or even hegemonic position in the religious landscape, whether it comes from the ranks of a majority or a minority religion, which social disadvantages it incurs, and which political and legal privileges may be enjoyed by critics of religion. Moreover, the degree to which the religion under attack is established socially, politically and legally may also influence the form that criticism of religion takes. Our analysis must also include the openness to criticism in the religious communities themselves. By taking into account the internal and external factors influencing the emergence, formation and spread of criticism of religion, we will be able to bundle together the many separate themes, and to investigate patterns, fluctuations and long-term developments not only from an interdisciplinary perspective, but also from a perspective that is transepocheal and transcultural. Of particular interest here is whether criticism of religion has fundamentally changed and become more radical since the Enlightenment; to what extent extrareligious criticism of religion can already be found in the premodern period; and how strong the lines of continuity are between the premodern and the modern.

3) Besides the conditions under which criticism of religion emerged and spread, the Cluster intends to explore the *intentions*, *functions* and *effects* of such criticism as well. Criticism of

religion can be directed at a particular religion or at religion in general; it can aim at reform; at the fight against magic and idolatry; at the purification of all things unholy; at the recovery of the buried “origin”, the preservation of the endangered tradition; at the renewal of religion and its revolutionizing. But it can also be aimed at the degradation, humiliation and abuse of religion, and even at its abolition and destruction. The unintended effects of criticism of religion should be distinguished from the intended goals. Even when meant constructively, criticism of religion can be misunderstood as a deliberate insult and hostile attack. It is also possible to reinterpret it deliberately as an insult and to use it as an occasion for discourses of outrage, for days of rage, and for legitimizing the use of violence. The functions and effects of criticism of religion are extremely diverse; they also change depending on whether criticism of religion is used for or against those in power, and depending on the media used.

4) This brings us to the fourth of our research goals: the question of *reactions to criticism of religion*. Apologetics is one such reaction. How religious communities deal with criticism of religion is of crucial importance when it comes to their potential for change. Do they repel it, accept it, perceive it as an enrichment or a threat? Do they assert themselves against it, or do they learn from it? We can distinguish exclusive, inclusive, pluralistic, and indifferent positions and reactions here. The exclusive reaction only accepts its own position; the inclusive reaction claims the superiority of its own position, but incorporates diverging critical attitudes into it; the pluralistic position holds many truth claims to be valid; and the indifferent position acknowledges none as valid. What conditions determine which of the positions or reactions appears in each case? How do criticism of religion and apologetics interact? Which strategies are used to accentuate a particular point of view? What degree of willingness is there to engage with the other point of view? The Cluster sets out to investigate the different forms that criticism of religion takes not in separation from each other, but instead relates criticism of religion and apologetics to each other, and interprets them in their interaction.

Programme of work. The concrete research projects envisaged take up these challenges. They cover wide periods of time, analyze the transitions between internal and external criticism of religion, the reciprocal relations between criticism of religion and apologetics, and thereby place the discourses analyzed in the context of the controversies of the time. Thus, the research project of Sita Steckel not only considers discourses critical of religion in the Latin West in the period between 1050 and 1300, but also treats them as part of a dispute between church reformers, religious orders, and heretical movements. The Middle Ages thereby appears not as a unified religious culture (Ernst Troeltsch), but as a dynamic era of religious plurality and productivity, a period that should be seen as part of a long history of religious pluralization. The extent to which the mediaeval discourses critical of religion can be regarded as forerunners of criticism of religion today is one of the project’s central questions.

Pia Doering is also concerned in her project with the transgression of borders of traditional church religion. She examines the new and alienating view on religion in the form of the novella that emerged in the 13th century. The novella no longer accepted the established normative perspective, but instead narrated a *casus*, an event falling outside the norm, and thus became a means to observe religion and its normativity critically. Doering's concern here is with how the view of religion was pluralized through the medium of literature.

André Krischer's project is located in the period of the transition to modernity. The project does not examine the 18th-century "high" literature texts critical of religion, since such texts have already been widely interpreted. Rather, it focuses on forms of lived unbelief in London in around 1800. Drawing on newspaper reports, court records, and as yet unevaluated informers' reports for the government, it examines criticism of religion in the reform and debating societies and in the subcultural milieus of the capital city, where not only blasphemous jokes, but also marriage ties and burials without church blessing, were part of everyday life. But the project also analyzes publications by atheists and deists critical of religion, thereby including in its study the interplay between oral-performative and written-print communication. This communication is understood as part of London urban culture, in which, after the lifting of censorship in 1695, criticism of religion could develop under the protection of metropolitan anonymity. Moreover, the project also addresses the reactions of representatives of the Anglican state church, whose apologetic arguments cannot be reduced to the status of reactionary orthodoxy, but prove to be responsive to objections critical of religion. By treating criticism of religion and apologetics in their reciprocal relationship, the project can also investigate their effects on the religious landscape.

Apologetics is also at the centre of the project conducted by Haila Manthegi-Amin. She deals with and edits for the first time the magnum opus *Āyena-ye ḥaqq-namā* by the Spanish Jesuit Jerónimo de Ezpelata y Goñi, which was written in the Indian Moghul empire in around 1600. In order to write this defence of the Catholic faith and attract the attention of the Moghul elite, the author had to learn Persian and Arabic, engage with Persian-Indian culture and Islamic theology, and adopt in his own work the patterns of argumentation usual there. As a result of this inclusive approach, his work was able to influence the style, content, themes and strategies in the Catholic-Shiite disputes and polemics of the period that followed.

The contested interactions between criticism of religion and apologetics, the transitions between intra- and interreligious forms of criticism of religion and apologetics, their location in the political conflicts of the time, and their use by political and religious elites – these are also the subject of two projects that are concerned with criticism of religion and apologetics from the perspective of Jewish studies (Regina Grundmann, "Polemics, social criticism and criticism of religion in Talmudic parodies of the 19th to 21st century") and Islamic studies (Dina El Omari,

“The ambiguity of Islamic-feminist discourses in the present”). Both projects focus on the intrareligious controversies between reform-oriented and orthodox currents, and on the innovative momentum for the development of religious communities that resulted from these controversies.

3.4.2 Theoretical perspectives

In contrast to the fields of research, no projects are located at the level of theoretical perspectives. Since the scholarly analysis of objects always depends on theoretical concepts, guiding questions, methodological decisions, and not least on culturally conditioned interests, theoretical perspectives play a role in all the projects. But they are not the Cluster’s central object of investigation.

It is nevertheless necessary for every empirical study to account for its theoretical background, analytical distinctions, conceptual definitions, and methodological design. This is all the more true in an interdisciplinary research context. To enable us to reflect critically on theoretical approaches and empirical methods, we will set up five theory platforms that accord with the theoretical perspectives outlined under 3.2.2 above. The interdisciplinary platforms “Mediality”, “Differentiation”, “Inequality”, “Conflict”, and “Emotionality” offer researchers the opportunity to become familiar with theoretical approaches from different disciplines, to discuss them critically, to develop a common terminology, but also to question assumptions and grand narratives that have become firmly anchored in one or another discipline.

3.4.3 Research Clouds

In addition to the fields of research, many projects are also located in Research Clouds, where issues arising from the fields of research and theoretical perspectives are brought together to deal with common specific questions. The Research Clouds are flexible and constantly reconstitute themselves as work progresses. Like the fields of research, we will provide the Research Clouds with financial means for the period of their existence to allow them to invite visiting scholars, to organize conferences and colloquia, and to publish papers. We have agreed on the following Research Clouds so far.

(1) Ambiguity and decision

Coordinator: Thomas Bauer (PI/ Islamic Studies)

“Deciding” is currently an important object of study for many academic disciplines, from neurology through cognitive psychology, economics, sociology, up to politics and law. In the foreground is usually the question of the conditions or limits of “rational” decision-making, although researchers have also recently emphasized that, and in how far, decision-making usually does not follow the ideal model of rationality (for example, Kahneman 2011; see most recently the

award of the Nobel Prize for Economics to Richard Thaler). In these discourses, decision-making is understood as an inner, *mental* event, and it is usually assumed *that* people constantly decide before or in the process of acting, with the focus here being on the extent to which they decide more or less “rationally”. The question not usually raised is *whether* they decide at all, and *under what conditions* they do decide.

From the point of view of the cultural and historical sciences, however, decision-making is – as an *observable, social* event – by no means self-evident. On the contrary, that *explicit* decisions are made at all appears to be more the exception than the rule. Much more frequent are routine, ritualized and habitual actions, incremental “coping”, acceptance of ambiguity and diffuse undecidedness, etc. That an object is even considered as requiring a decision and as being decidable is a consequence of historically variable circumstances.

This is where the question posed by the Research Cloud comes in. We will examine the historical conditions under which religious questions become the object of *explicit* decision-making, and which questions it is that are subject to decision-making – for example, affiliation to a community of faith, the content of beliefs, the wearing of certain garments, eating habits, or the performance of religious rituals. Classical modernization theories assume that the scope for individual and social decision-making is greater in modern than in premodern societies, and that today more issues are made the object of decision-making than was the case in the past. The sociologist Uwe Schimank has brought these reflections together to form the thesis that modern society is a “decision society” (Schimank 2006). According to Schimank, decision-making is more formal and procedural today than in earlier periods; people now deal with the *components of traditions* more critically, reward *innovations* rather than routines, foster higher expectations of the rationality of decision-making, etc. The question that arises with regard to the focus of the Cluster is: to what extent does this also apply to religious communities? Do they for their part turn increasingly into organizations that make their actions more and more subject to decision-making? And, if so, how does this affect the powers of persuasion held by religious rituals, worldviews, and communitizations? Of central importance are the questions as to which historical conditions there are for religious questions to be made available to human decision-making; when and why ambiguity is no longer tolerated; and when and why the need for disambiguation arises (see Stollberg-Rilinger/Pietsch 2013). Formulating alternative decisions can break traditions open, set innovations in motion, and motivate social and political developments. The question is, how such processes of religious disambiguation take place, and what consequences are entailed by these processes.

A problem resulting from the generation of alternatives in religious doctrine and practice is that the contingency of the religious thereby becomes dramatically visible. As long as religious forms of meaning and religious communities are embedded in a cultural environment from which they are barely distinguishable, then they are largely supported by the social order. But

as soon as they stand out from, or even oppose, the social order, then the problem of their legitimacy arises. Which *sacralization practices* religions draw on to deal with the contingency of their forms of meaning, how they conceal, justify, tabooize, and make this contingency ambivalent – this is of great relevance for their plausibility. Behind the distinction between ambiguity and decision is therefore always also the question of the degree to which the religious is accepted in society.

To examine the relationship between ambiguity and decision in the religious field, we will proceed by working in a transepochal and transcultural manner. As Thomas Bauer (2011) has shown, the classical period of Islam was characterized by a high tolerance for ambiguity, and saw not only the acceptance but even also the appreciation of religious ambiguity, such as the openness to various interpretations of the Quran. Christianity, in contrast, already tried in its early stages to reach decisions in religious issues, such as regarding the formation of the canon, the hierarchy of offices, and the confession of faith. Johannes Hahn examines from this perspective the Christian mission after the Constantinian shift. He reconstructs how fanaticized bishops and clerics deployed the religious/secular dichotomy to stigmatize followers of other cults and brand dissenters in their own ranks as heretics; how they sought to gain influence at the imperial court; what local networks they built; and which political and legal, but also violent, means they used to win the local elites for themselves or to break their resistance (→ field of research “Transcultural entanglement and disentanglement”, theoretical perspective “Mediality”). But he also sheds light on the limits of their efforts and on the resistance of polytheistic cults, and analyzes the conflictual character of politically charged religious innovations in late antiquity (→ theoretical perspective “Conflict”).

Iris Fleßenkämper deals with processes of disambiguation of a completely different nature. Her project addresses on the one hand the coexistence and competition of different norm systems for regulating matrimonial matters in the age of confessionalization. She is interested in how people dealt with the simultaneous validity of local customary rules, new police regulations, church expectations of behaviour, and traditions of the *ius commune*. On the other, her project raises the question as to how far the coexistence and competition of norms was possibly a transitional phenomenon on the path to establishing universal norms. Located at the interface between the premodern and the modern, this project studies transepochal developments and helps us to discuss macrohistorical theories of modernization critically.

The project carried out by Sarah Demmrich and Detlef Pollack treats forms of fundamentalism among Muslim immigrants in Germany as a characteristic feature of modernity. Fundamentalist movements press for religious clarity, separate their own position from its traditional embedding (Roy 2008), deprive it of historicity, and thereby place that position above all other religious or ideological positions (→ field of research “Criticism of religion and apologetics”). They thereby distinguish themselves fundamentally from traditional attitudes, which push less

for religious decisions and distance themselves less strongly from deviating beliefs. The project investigates the logic of justification behind such exclusive superiority claims, but also relates fundamentalist attitudes to their social conditions and analyzes the influence of education, socialization, origin, experience of discrimination, perceived injustice, as well as extra- and intrareligious contacts (→ theoretical perspective “Inequality”). It attaches particular importance to analyzing the connection between fundamentalism and the affinity to violence (→ theoretical perspective “Conflict”).

This Research Cloud can build on the Collaborative Research Centre (CRC) “Cultures of Decision-Making”, which, established in 2015, complements the Cluster and allows for synergy effects (see 5.2.1(3)). While the CRC is interested in the practices and semantics of decision-making generally, the Cloud deals with decision-making when it comes to religious matters.

(2) Theological doctrine and lived religiosity

Coordinator: Michael Seewald (PI/ Catholic Theology)

The dogmatic doctrine of penance and indulgences has not changed in the Roman Catholic Church since the Reformation. The forgiveness of sins remains bound to the act of confession. However, most Catholics, both in a largely secularized country like Germany and, for example, in highly Catholic Poland, have now largely abandoned this theological construction. Confession is only rarely used, and indulgences, although still available, have almost disappeared. Conversely, we also know of cases where theological doctrine has changed without the practice of faith following it. For example, New Testament exegesis has long since made the authentic birthplace of Jesus not Bethlehem, but Nazareth. Every year at Christmas, however, the story of Joseph and Mary’s journey to the city of David is retold by the faithful and re-enacted in countless nativity plays across the world.

The tense relationship between theological doctrine and lived religiosity that is the focus of this Research Cloud permeates the entire history of religion and is an issue in religious communities themselves (→ field of research “Criticism of religion and apologetics”). For Enlightenment theology, for example, the distinction between theology and religion is virtually essential (Beutel 2014: 229). Such discrepancies are by no means limited to Christianity, but also exist in Judaism and Islam. While, for example, many Muslims around the world today may share a belief in the divine origin and uncreatedness of the Quran, the insights provided by an Islamic theology working with historical methods are gaining in importance.

The Research Cloud seeks to explore the tense relationship between theological doctrine and lived religiosity by examining disputes over the historical nature of religiously binding texts. On the one hand, normative texts of Judaism, Christianity and Islam will be analyzed exegetically both with regard to their genesis and their later tradition (→ theoretical perspective “Mediality”).

On the other, the resulting challenges for the practice of faith will be reflected on from theological as well as philosophical points of view.

With regard to the first goal, religiously binding texts will be gathered and reconstructed using methods of the digital humanities. They will be processed digitally in their history of genesis and tradition, and then made publicly accessible via an online platform. For Christianity, magisterial decisions made by the Catholic Church (Hubert Wolf) and interpretable variants of the New Testament and their reception in reformatory and modern translations (Holger Strutwolf) have been selected; for Islam, exemplary passages of the Quran on peace and violence (Mouhanad Khorchide in cooperation with Angelika Neuwirth, Corpus Coranicum, Berlin); and, for Judaism, individual passages of the Pesach Haggadah (Clemens Leonhard in cooperation with Ben-Gurion University, Beer Sheva, Israel). Philologists and computer scientists will work closely together in each project. The DH projects will also receive technical support from the newly established Centre for Digital Humanities (CDH) at the University of Münster Library. The texts will be brought together with other religiously binding texts on a platform Digital Theologies in Münster. In order to ensure the international usability of the platform, we are planning to work closely with the European Association for Digital Humanities (EADH).

The Cluster is very well placed to work on projects in the field of digital humanities. Through his edition of the Nuncial Reports of Eugenio Pacelli and of the diaries of Michael von Faulhaber (Pacelli edition and Faulhaber edition), Hubert Wolf has extensive experience in database-supported text editing. The material for the project led by Holger Strutwolf is contained in the research portal New Testament Virtual Manuscript Room (NTVMR), established by the Institute for New Testament Textual Research (INTF); the portal is the world's largest digital archive of New Testament manuscripts and transcripts (<http://ntvmr.uni-muenster.de/>).

With regard to our second goal (theological and philosophical reflections on the problems posed to the practice of faith that result from applying historical-critical methods to religious normative texts), two projects shall be presented here as examples. The question as to which theological status is given to a lived religiosity that deviates from the doctrine of faith (Höhn 2008) is at the centre of the theological project carried out by Michael Seewald. He argues that we should not rush prematurely to side with academic theology, but instead take seriously the logic and intrinsic meaning of the practice of faith. This issue is also of central importance in the dialogue between theologians of different religious provenance, with the project therefore differentiating between religious communities and milieus in which the discrepancy between theological doctrines and lived religiosity triggers conflicts, and those in which this is hardly or not at all the case (→ fields of research "Transcultural entanglement and disentanglement" and "Criticism of religion and apologetics").

The appraisal of lived religiosity from the perspective of religious theory is also the central focus of the philosophical project carried out by Michael Quante. Using a non-cognitivist approach, he sees religiosity as a form of expressing religious attitudes and experiences that are based not on intersubjective reasoning, but on practical probation in how people conduct their lives. Like Seewald, Quante also places religious statements in the context of other language games in order to analyze their use in plural discourses and to make them accessible to rational criticism (→ field of research “Criticism of religion and apologetics”).

(3) Migration and diaspora

Coordinator: Detlef Pollack (PI/ Sociology of Religion)

Hardly any other factor has changed European societies so much in recent years as the immigration of refugees from non-European countries (→ field of research “Transcultural entanglement and disentanglement”). The migration movement has an obvious religious dimension. This applies not only to the immigrants, who are faced with balancing their cultural and religious background with the need to integrate into the host country; it also applies to the host societies themselves, which must learn to cope with growing religious plurality. This Research Cloud is concerned with analyzing the changes to the complex relationships between immigrants and host society, as well as the role that religion plays in these relationships.

We have three main questions here. First, we wish to examine how far religious ties influence the process of integrating immigrants into the host society. Does affiliation to religious networks and communities help or hinder immigrants when it comes to participating in the education system, in the labour market, in political life? Is religion a social capital that promotes involvement in civil society and the building of interpersonal trust? Are there differences here between the religious communities? Do religious ties become tighter in response to experiences in the host country, such as discrimination, cultural disdain or segregation? In doing so, we will of course examine the influence of religion on processes of integration in conjunction with other influences, such as language competence, social status of the parental home, duration of stay, age, gender, etc.; and we will specifically consider the extent to which the different factors mutually reinforce or weaken each other (→ theoretical perspective “Inequality”).

Second, we wish to examine the attitudes of the majority population to increasing religious diversity, as well as to individual religious communities. To what extent do people see increasing religious diversity as a cultural enrichment, and to what extent do they see it as a threat to their own cultural, political and religious (or indeed secular) identity? How great is tolerance towards those religious minorities whose discourses and practices are perceived by many as alien? How do social status, education, age, experiences of uprooting and anomie, etc. influence feelings of threat and the readiness to be tolerant (→ theoretical perspective “Inequality”)?

Third, we are interested in the relations between immigrant religious minorities and majority society. To what extent can interactions contribute to reducing reservations, feelings of threat, and emotions of rejection? Indeed, is it perhaps not the case that people only form their ideas of their own cultural-religious identity when faced with the other? Under what conditions do contacts reduce or fuel conflict? Researchers repeatedly point out that what exerts a strong influence here is the gap in power and authority between the interaction partners. What other factors are relevant to the escalation or de-escalation of conflicts, to processes of radicalization and de-radicalization, on the part both of the immigrants and of the majority society? How significant are certain social places and networks, such as associations, mosque communities or schools? A new cultural-political cleavage is currently emerging in European societies and the USA, one that is increasingly overriding the traditional tensions between rich and poor, Catholicism and Protestantism, periphery and centre (Lipset/Rokkan 1967): namely, the cleavage between multicultural, cosmopolitan and liberal milieus on the one hand, and locally rooted segments of the population with regional and national or ethnic worldviews on the other (Zürn 2016; Reines *et al.* 2017). It is obvious that religion is an important determinant in this newly emerging conflict. Investigating mechanisms and social conditions involved in the escalation or de-escalation of such conflicts, and the role that religion plays here, therefore has direct political relevance (→ theoretical perspective “Conflict”).

All three questions will be addressed by a large-scale international survey project, which will be the responsibility of sociologists, psychologists and political scientists (Detlef Pollack, Mitja Back/Gerald Echterhoff, Bernd Schlipphak), and which will also involve the Berlin Social Science Centre (Ruud Kopmans). First, the project will study the attitudes and practices of Turkish Muslims in selected Western and Eastern European countries in order to understand better the factors determining socio-structural and cultural integration. The focus here will be on the role of religiosity and religious practice compared to the role played by education, gender, language competence, length of stay, experiences of discrimination and rejection, but also in relation to the legal regulations of the religious field (→ theoretical perspective “Inequality”, field of research “Religious diversity and legal-political unity”). We will also analyze the extent to which transcultural networks established by migrants between their countries of origin and the host society influence processes of integration (→ field of research “Transcultural entanglement and disentanglement”). This factor is of peculiar interest, since integration does not mean abandoning relationships to society of origin and complete assimilation. The aim of the project is therefore to work out different patterns in the relationship between the poles of assimilation and cultural self-assertion. In doing so, we wish to make a substantial contribution to discussions between neo-assimilation theories and theories of reactive ethnicity/religiosity (Alba/Nee 2005; Foner/Alba 2008; Fleischmann/Phalet 2012; Alba/Foner 2015).

Second, the project aims to investigate the connection between perception of threat, collective self-image and acceptance of democracy in the majority population of the selected European countries (→ theoretical perspective “Emotionality”). The project assumes that the connections between these three variables are influenced by economic, legal, political, but also by religious, factors, and is particularly interested in understanding the interplay of these factors. By simultaneously analyzing the perspective of minorities and majorities and their contextualization, the authors of the study hope to obtain more detailed information on the mechanisms that escalate or de-escalate conflicts between significant parts of the indigenous majority society and religious minorities (→ theoretical perspective “Conflict”).

This Research Cloud will also examine the social locations and media that may be relevant to minimizing or escalating tensions. The project led by Mouhanad Khorchide raises the question of what is preached in German mosques. It employs a complex study design that combines statements of religious actors with observations by third persons. The project carried out by Hinnerk Wissmann and Arnulf von Scheliha will deal with the growing religious diversity of pupils in religious lessons at state schools in Germany, where the state has entrusted religious education to the churches. Wissmann and von Scheliha investigate whether and to what extent such religious education can function as a place where different religious faiths meet, and tolerance and dialogue are practised (→ field of research “Religious diversity and legal-political unity”). The project will be given empirical support through cooperation with the Comenius Institute, which has many years’ experience in studying intercultural and interreligious education (see 5.3.1(4)). Moreover, by interpreting literary works as aesthetic locations of social communication, Martina Wagner-Egelhaaf provides the Research Cloud in her project with a perspective from literary studies. The project examines literary figures of hate from the Old Testament to contemporary literature, and investigates the interlocking of social, political and religious dimensions in hate rhetoric (→ theoretical perspective “Emotionality”).

To expand the possibilities of intercultural comparisons, we will also use seed money to initiate projects that focus on migration movements from Germany to the USA, and from the USA to Germany (responsible here are Heike Bungert, North American History, and Maren Freudenberg, CERES). International comparison is important since it can help us to estimate better the relevance of *cultural, institutional and practical* influences in each case.

(4) Religious mobilization and de-institutionalization

Coordinator: Astrid Reuter (PI/ Religious Studies)

The central question in this Research Cloud is the extent to which the political role of religion depends on its anchoring in society, its support among broad segments of the population, and its embedding in socially shared worlds of imagination. In the USA, for example, Christian

values, belief in God and social-moral distinctions between “good” and “evil” are, despite unmistakable tendencies of secularization, widely accepted; at the same time, religious arguments play a major role in justifying political action, such as the USA’s commitment to enforcing democracy and freedom in the world. In Europe, however, the widely dechurchified and secularized population is largely sceptical when it comes to such ideas (→ theoretical perspective “Differentiation”). Is there a connection between the social support enjoyed by a religious community and its political dynamics?

Raising this question also means making more explicit what has hitherto been a rather implicit distinction: namely, the distinction between the internal dynamics of religion, i.e., its capacity to renew itself and to mobilize people, and its capacity to change and bring dynamics into the outside world, i.e., its influence on politics, economics, art, music, literature, medicine, etc. Dynamics internal and external to religion need not go hand in hand. Even small religious groups with a low level of social support (for example, Salafis or Evangelicals in Europe, or ultra-orthodox Jews in Israel) can achieve considerable external effects, just as powerful social entities such as the Christian churches in Western Europe often have only a low impact today. We assume that this connection is highly relevant to the political influence of religious communities, its conflictual nature, its long-term impact, and the activation of political counter-forces. But what does the social support of religious groupings, communities and organizations depend on? Secularization theories highlight the importance of changes to society as a whole, such as urbanization, industrialization, increases in the level of existential security, and processes of democratization. These approaches tend to treat religion as a dependent variable (Norris/Inglehart 2012). By contrast, economic market models emphasize the agency of religious organizations and groupings, which, depending on the forms of legal regulation of the religious market and the extent of religious plurality, are able to mobilize their supporters themselves (Stark/Finke 2000). Individualization theories, in turn, focus on changes to forms of religiosity and spirituality, such as their greater dependence on individual decisions and their low institutional support (Luckmann 1967; Davie 2002); yet, they remain unclear when it comes to explaining the social causes of these changes, and even regarding how to measure these changes in the first place.

The projects in this Research Cloud deal with the question of which external conditions and internal resources enable religious communities to mobilize supporters, and which factors, conversely, explain processes of religious de-institutionalization. Both questions can be used to study the effectiveness of the binding power of religion. The project led by Dorothea E Schulz, for example, highlights the effects of the aesthetic-sensory, performative-choreographic and cognitive-argumentative dimensions of religious practice on the mobilization successes of religious leaders in the religiously plural landscape of contemporary Uganda (→ theoretical perspectives “Mediality” and “Emotionality”). In doing so, she considers not only the

strategies used by religious leaders, but also the institutional, political, technical and cultural framework conditions that influence their actions. She attaches particular importance to the interplay between the respective intentions of the religious leaders and external factors, such as the actions of the national government and in particular of the internationally active Pentecostal organizations from the USA. It is only by considering this interplay that the situation on the ground can be understood in the first place (→ field of research “Religious diversity and legal-political unity”). The collaborative project led by Jens Köhrsen deals with a completely different cultural space, investigating as he does how the different successes of the Pentecostal movement in Guatemala and Argentina can be explained. Astrid Reuter examines in her project the attractiveness of new spiritual movements under the shelter of the Catholic Church, with her starting point being the observation that secularization tendencies are countered by new forms of religious re-institutionalization. All of these projects are concerned with identifying factors that can explain religious mobilization, and at the same time with the question of the extent to which social mobilization in the religious communities studied is related to their politicization. In contrast, Christel Gärtner’s project focuses on determinants of religious de-institutionalization, as can be currently observed in Western Europe, a subject already addressed in the Cluster by Thomas Grossbölting (2017), Karl Gabriel (2008) and Detlef Pollack (Pollack/Rosta 2017). Gärtner will now examine this process by investigating the dwindling ability of families to pass on religious ties from one generation to the next.

(5) Genesis and validity

Coordinator: Thomas Gutmann (PI/ Legal Studies)

When it comes to the legal framing of religious diversity, a widely discussed question is how the legal arrangements governing religion that grew from the history of conflict with and within Christianity can deal with the increasing pluralization of the religious landscape, and whether the model of liberal democratic constitutional systems needs to be changed (Weller 2005; Bastian/Messner 2007; Monsma/Soper 2009; Beaman 2012; Joppke/Torpey 2013; Foblets/Alidadi/Yanasmayan/Nielsen 2014; Bottoni/Cristofori/Ferrari 2016) (→ field of research “Religious diversity and legal-political unity”). This debate is conducted under the heading of “secularism” primarily in the Anglo-American world (Kuru 2009; Calhoun *et al.* 2011; Zuckerman/Shook 2017). It is mainly concerned with the question of whether the legal separation of church and state, and thus the religious and ideological neutrality of the state, is a necessary condition for guaranteeing religious freedom and the equal treatment of different religious communities (→ theoretical perspective “Differentiation”). Or are more flexible forms sufficient for determining the relationship between political-legal and religious individuals and groups, such as forms of negotiating compromises, of “reasonable accommodation” (Bouchard/Taylor 2008), or of an “associational governance of religious diversity” (Bader 2007)? Often cited in this context is Alfred Stepan’s suggestion that we understand the principle of “twin tolerations”, i.e., the mutual tolerance between religious and political authorities regarding their respective claims to autonomy, as “the minimal boundaries of freedom of action” (Stepan 2001: 213, 217). Many scholars address the question of which religious-political principles and institutions facilitate the handling of religious plurality by comparing Western and non-Western ideas of religious and political order. They debate the limitations and problems of liberal secularism by comparing it above all with the Indian model (Bhargava 2009; Balagangadhara/De Roover 2007; De Roover *et al.* 2011).

How religious-political systems can be justified normatively under conditions of religious plurality has long been discussed in the Cluster. The result is a list of monographs and anthologies both on the legitimacy of religious arguments as a justification for politically binding decisions, and on the question of the appropriate model of the relationship between religion and politics, or between religious traditions and the state. Examples include books on the role of religious arguments in biopolitical debates and decisions in selected Western Europe countries and the USA (Weiberg-Salzmann 2018); on the need for reform and the reformability of religious policies in Germany (Gerster/van Melis/Willems 2018); on the disintegrative consequences of the secular state model (Spohn 2016); and also on the importance of culturally and religiously conveyed collective historical experiences for the establishment of legal norms (Gutmann *et al.* 2018).

The Research Cloud builds on this preliminary work. Thus, Ulrich Willems intends to trace the contours of a normative theory of religious-political order under conditions of religious plurality, one that does not proceed from fixed secular principles. He argues that the liberal principles of civil equality and the securing of individual freedom by no means imply a strict separation of church and state. Rather, as Willems argues, what is needed is a theory that switches from the principle of secular neutrality as a criterion to regulate religious plurality to processes of context-related judgments and to forms of *modus vivendi*. The opposite position is taken by Thomas Gutmann, however, who considers the emergence of the modern secular state as a response to the question of how religiously divided societies can be politically integrated, and treats the separation of church and state as a feature of normative modernity. It is not in terms of the justification of its secular principles that the liberal constitutional state has deficits, Gutmann argues; rather, it is in terms of the moral power and social acceptance of these norms. His project is therefore centrally concerned with the extent to which the dynamic power of religion, which was already constitutive for the genesis of secular normative order, also has relevance for its validity (→ theoretical perspective “Differentiation”).

The project carried out by Joachim Renn is also concerned with the socio-moral foundations of the modern state system. For Renn, the erosion of the rational-moral self-legitimation of the secular normative order in the late-modern period obliges us to think fundamentally again about the relationship of the “modern” to religion. Did an ethically transformed religiosity really conflict with the functional requirements of modern state administration and the political public domain? Or, on the contrary, was it not the case that a religiosity freed from propositional commitments and habitualized in the practice of life was, as a motivational resource, in actual fact the prerequisite for modern constitutional order? Renn intends to examine this question by looking at the influence that the religious milieu of the Prussian civil servants had on the sociogenesis of civil society and state order in Prussia in the 19th century.

To relativize our discussion on the genesis and validity of the secular political order, which is concentrated on Western Europe and the USA, we wish to refer to North and East Africa. We will take up the criticism of political secularism, as practised by Talal Asad (2003), Charles Hirschkind (2006), Hussein Ali Agrama (2012), and Saba Mahmood (2015), and will further develop it by providing it with new empirical foundations. The problems of political secularism have been widely discussed since the 1980s with reference primarily to India and the East Asian region. By focusing on selected regions in East and North Africa, where the nation-state is weak in terms of its ability to enforce its decisions, and where new constellations of conflict in the interaction between different religious groupings and political interests are emerging, as well as new forms of conflict settlement at the local level, we open up a new comparative perspective (→ theoretical perspective “Conflict”). In doing so, we refer to the discussion on the “Theory from the South” (Comaroff/Comaroff 2012a, 2012b; Mbembe 2012). The empirical

basis of this theory has previously been limited to, besides India and Brazil, South Africa. We will extend it to North and East Africa and will furnish this theory with a new thematic focus by investigating the active role of religion in these constellations of conflict. The plan is to set up an international network for research on Africa that is related to religion, “Religious pluralism: conceptual, normative and empirical perspectives”. This network will deal with religious processes of negotiation in Africa in their entanglements with social, political and economic processes of transformation. To examine the suitability of secular church/state models for resolving religious conflicts peacefully, we can refer to international comparative research on forms of state regulation and control of the religious field (Fox 2008, 2015; Grim/Finke 2006; <http://www.religionandstate.org/>). These analyses can provide the normative question of the appropriateness of religious-political models of order with an empirical foundation.

3.5 Bibliography

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