

Interdisciplinary Research Policies and Practices in Germany

Report

**Rebecca Krebs and Silke Wenk
Carl von Ossietzky Universität, Oldenburg**

February 2006

| | |
|---|----|
| Introduction..... | 4 |
| Structure..... | 4 |
| Data collection and analysis process..... | 5 |
| 1.1 The German Research Foundation (DFG)..... | 6 |
| 1.1.1 The DFG's funding of the humanities and social sciences..... | 7 |
| 1.2 Support for the humanities and social sciences from the private funding sector..... | 8 |
| 1.3 The role of the EU research programmes | 9 |
| 1.4 Advisory bodies | 9 |
| 1.5 Views on the situation in the humanities and social sciences: the political parties and the advisory board | 10 |
| 1.5.1 Situation of the humanities and social sciences..... | 10 |
| 1.5.2 The importance of the humanities: different political views on their function | 12 |
| 1.5.3 Proposed strategies to strengthen the social sciences and humanities: (inter)disciplinarity and recommended changes | 13 |
| 1.6 Conclusions..... | 15 |
| 2 DFG – the German Research Foundation..... | 16 |
| 2.1 Different initiatives of the <i>DFG</i> | 16 |
| 2.1.1 Collaborative Research Centres as interdisciplinary research centres..... | 17 |
| 2.1.2 Cultural Studies Research Centres..... | 18 |
| 2.1.3 Review procedure for both the Collaborative Research Centre and the Cultural Studies Research Centre | 20 |
| 2.2 Policy of the <i>DFG</i> | 21 |
| 2.2.1 Research policy regarding the actual situation of research in the humanities | 21 |
| 2.2.2 Policy of the <i>DFG</i> concerning the question of interdisciplinarity | 22 |
| 2.3 Conclusions..... | 24 |
| 3 Interdisciplinary practice in the <i>SFB</i> Gießen..... | 26 |
| 3.1 Research teams – construction of the teams and disciplinary and interdisciplinary background | 27 |
| 3.1.1 Construction of the teams | 27 |
| 3.1.2 Disciplinary affinities and interdisciplinary experience | 27 |
| 3.2 Theoretical positioning and concept..... | 28 |
| 3.3 Organisation..... | 29 |
| 3.3.1 Basic structure..... | 29 |
| 3.3.2 Communication and interdisciplinary work..... | 30 |
| 3.4 Consequences for the participating (junior) researchers, i.e. their disciplinary careers | 32 |
| 3.6 Summary | 34 |
| 4 Interdisciplinary practice in the <i>FK/SFB</i> Cologne..... | 35 |
| 4.1. Research teams – construction of the teams and disciplinary and interdisciplinary background | 36 |
| 4.1.1 Construction of the teams | 36 |
| 4.1.2 Disciplinary affinities and interdisciplinary experiences..... | 36 |
| 4.2 Theoretical positioning and concept..... | 38 |
| 4.3 Organisation..... | 39 |
| 4.3.1 Basic structure..... | 39 |
| 4.3.2 Communication and interdisciplinary work..... | 40 |

| | |
|--|----|
| 4.4 Consequences for the research context at university – long term investment in interdisciplinary-work? | 44 |
| 4.5 Summary | 44 |
| 5 Personal views and motivations related to interdisciplinarity | 46 |
| 5.1 Individual motivation and interdisciplinarity..... | 46 |
| 5.1.2 Views on the value of interdisciplinary influences on the individual research | 46 |
| 5.1.3 <i>Begriffsarbeit</i> – the work on a common language as interdisciplinary discourse | 47 |
| 5.2 Borders and the ‘other’ | 48 |
| 5.2.1 Collaborative Research Centre ‘ <i>Erinnerungskulturen</i> ’ (Memory Cultures) in Gießen..... | 49 |
| 5.2.2 Cultural Studies Centre ‘ <i>Medien und kulturelle Kommunikation</i> ’ (Media and cultural communication) Cologne..... | 51 |
| 5.3 Conclusions..... | 53 |
| Summary | 55 |
| Tables..... | 57 |
| Bibliography | 61 |

Introduction

This report *Interdisciplinary research policies and practices in Germany* is part of the European research project *Challenging Knowledge and Disciplinary Boundaries through Integrative Research Methods in the Social Sciences and Humanities*. The project is funded by the European Commission under Framework 6 (CIT2-CT-2004-506013). It runs over a period of three years, and includes nine project partners from eight different European countries: Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Norway, Spain, Sweden, and the UK. The focus of the project Research Integration is an exploration of the many and diverse factors that can cause the fragmentation between the social sciences and the humanities or sustain the opportunities for interdisciplinary research in Europe.

During the second year of the project we have been analysing national interdisciplinary research practices taking into account the research policy and analysing research programmes that promote interdisciplinary practice between the social sciences and humanities. In the German case, our partner team at the University of Frankfurt Main has been focusing on the Volkswagen Foundation (*Volkswagenstiftung*), the largest private research foundation in the field of the social sciences and humanities, while we, the researchers from the University of Oldenburg, have been examining the main national research foundation in Germany, the German Research Foundation (*DFG*).

For our two case studies we chose to analyse projects from two different Coordinated Programmes of the *DFG*, the Collaborative Research Centre (*Sonderforschungsbereich*) and the Cultural Studies Research Centre (*Kulturwissenschaftliches Forschungskolleg*). The projects chosen in the two programmes are positioned in two different interdisciplinary fields which are the memory debate and media studies. These two research areas are shared by the social sciences and humanities. This was also the reason for our choice related to the analysis of interdisciplinary co-operation between the two academic fields. At the same time the research on memory and media can be related to the debate about the *Kulturwissenschaften* in Germany. This debate may have led to an increase of interdisciplinary approaches and an opening up of the humanities to other disciplinary fields.

Structure

In the first section we describe the actual policy practice of public and private funding and the individual positioning of the different parties taking part in this process (political parties, advisory boards) towards research in the social sciences and humanities. In the second section we continue with a close analysis of the *DFG*, focusing in particular on the concept and organisation of the two interdisciplinary programmes, the Collaborative Research Centre and the Cultural Studies Research Centre.

In section 3 and 4 we describe different aspects of interdisciplinary practice at project level by concentrating on our case studies of the two different research projects. In these two sections we analyse the origin of the project initiatives. Further we ask how

interdisciplinary practice is organised and understood. Finally we analyse the effects the interdisciplinary projects have had on their research environments. In the last section we focus on the personal views of the interviewed researchers of the two projects on interdisciplinarity discussing their motivations and evaluations.

Data collection and analysis process

In the first phase of the examination of the projects we designed a questionnaire to collect data at policy and programme level. To conduct our case studies, we used semi-structured interviews in addition to official documents (letters, policy statements, guidelines, websites, and documented speeches). We used these interviews to identify the coordinators' and the research collaborators' understandings of interdisciplinary research practice in the context of their individual academic fields. Our selection of the interview partners was influenced by two aspects. Firstly, it was important for us not only to speak to senior researchers (often in leading positions), but also to include junior researchers. Secondly, we wanted to conduct interviews with researchers from different disciplinary backgrounds, both the social sciences and the humanities.

When we contacted the interview partners we first informed them about the purpose of the case studies as part of our research project. All the interview partners were very cooperative. We then agreed to use the quotations and paraphrases in our publication anonymously. We recorded the data of the interviews and/or made additional notes during the interviews. We then transcribed the interviews. Our case presentations are supported by our analytic positions. We understand interdisciplinary working as the possibility to gain new knowledge. This may happen by reflecting on and/or transgressing disciplinary borders. Accordingly we want to analyse in how far such a transgression has been realised. Central are organisational conditions in interdisciplinary projects and the individual experience with them. We are also interested in conflicts which might arise in the course of such a **process. of interdisciplinary working.**

The results of the interviews have influenced our understanding of interdisciplinary practice. Having started from an analysis of external structures which sustain or hamper interdisciplinarity, we have come to realise the specific relevance of the personal involvement and attitudes of the individual researchers participating in the project.

1 Research policy and interdisciplinarity in the social sciences and humanities¹

In Germany, research is primarily financed from three sources: the state (*Bund* and the *Länder*), the German Research Foundation (DFG), and other research funding organisations in the private research sector. The legal and financial responsibility for research support is in the hands of the federal states (*Länder*). Public research support organisations have in Germany, for historical reasons, the legal status of associations, foundations, or non-profit enterprises formed under German private law.

1.1 The German Research Foundation (DFG)

The DFG is the central organisation for research funding in Germany. It provides funding for all areas of research. It is responsible for funding research both in universities and in research institutions. The DFG has concentrated its profile in three main strategic areas: (1) it is committed to advancing the careers of young researchers, (2) it pays special attention to complex research issues by supporting interdisciplinarity and networking, and (3) it advances the internationalisation of research and worldwide co-operation (see: <http://www.dfg.de/en/dfg_profile/mission/index.html, 8.2.06>).

In organisational terms, the DFG is an association formed under private law. Its members include most German universities, non-university research establishments, scientific federations, and the academies of the sciences (*Akademien der Wissenschaften*). The DFG receives its funding from the federal (*Bund*) and state (*Länder*) authorities, which are represented in all decision-making bodies. Scientists and academics are in the majority on these bodies (see <http://www.dfg.de/en/dfg_profile/search, 8.2.06>).

The federal government provides 758.3 million euros per annum, the federal states 545.3 million euros, and the Donors' Association for the Promotion of Science and the Humanities in Germany 2.2 million euros (as of 2004; see Table 1, appendix tables).

In 2004, the DFG provided 189.4 million euros towards research in the humanities and social sciences, 482.3 million for the life sciences (medicine, biology, agriculture, forestry) 321 million for the natural sciences (geological sciences, chemistry, physics, mathematics) and 268.8 million for the engineering sciences (mechanical and industrial/thermal and process engineering; material science, electrical engineering and computer sciences, construction engineering and architecture) (see Table 2).

In 2004, the DFG's budget amounted to 1.31 billion euros. From the total budget, 740.2 million euros were spent on general research support, 360 million on interdisciplinary collaborative research centres, and 72.4 million on interdisciplinary research training groups (Tables 3-5).

¹ This section was written together with Irini Siouti and Ursula Apitzsch, our partner team at the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University of Frankfurt.

1.1.1 The DFG's funding of the humanities and social sciences

The DFG is the most important agency in Germany for the funding of the social sciences and humanities in universities and research institutes. In 2004 alone, it provided 190 million euros for the social sciences and humanities, which was 15% of total funding (Winnacker 2005; see Table 2 and Table 6).

Funding for social science and humanities research by the DFG takes the form of different research types, individual grants, and interdisciplinary programmes, e.g. collaborative research centres (*Sonderforschungsbereiche*) und research training groups (*Graduiertenkollegs*) (see our report: section 2). The DFG pays special attention to supporting interdisciplinary research and networking through different initiatives, e.g. the collaborative research centres and research training groups (section 2).

The most prominent example of this effort to support cross-disciplinary research is what is known as the excellence initiative (*Exzellenzinitiative*) of the *Bund* and the *Länder*. This has given rise to some controversy, and aims to advance top-level university research with a total budget of €1.9 billion for the period 2006 through 2011 (<http://www.dfg.de/en/coordinated_programmes/excellence_initiative/general_information.html, 20.12.2005). This budget will be split along three lines of funding:

- graduate schools to support young researchers
- clusters of excellence to support world class research
- institutional strategies to support top level university research.

The programme provides for a two-stage application procedure. The result of the first stage which was announced in January 2006 shows that only 10% of the projects that are eligible for the second stage have been chosen from the humanities and social sciences

(http://www.dfg.de/forschungsfoerderung/koordinierte_programme/exzellenzinitiative/index.html).

This result caused the German *Wissenschaftsrat* (Science Council) to reflect on the problem that the concept of the excellence initiative might not be very well suited to the humanities and social sciences (on this point see section 1.5.5).

The DFG supports the humanities through explicit measures at research policy level, the humanities research funding initiative (*Wissenschaftsrat* 2006: 35). According to the *Wissenschaftsrat*'s report, entitled *Recommendations on the Development and Promotion of the Humanities*, the humanities' proportion of total research funding from the DFG rose from 7.7 to 9.2% between 1990 and 2003. This increase is attributed to the growth in the number of grants in the coordinated cross-disciplinary programmes (the collaborative research centres and research training).

1.2 Support for the humanities and social sciences from the private funding sector

There are several foundations in Germany which support humanities and social science research. The largest private foundation is the VW Foundation, which provided 21.8 million euros to support the humanities and social sciences in 2004 alone (on this point see Apitzsch and Siouti 2006: section 3). In addition to the VW Foundation, the Fritz Thyssen Foundation is of special importance for the humanities and social sciences. In 2003, this foundation supported the humanities and cultural studies (*Geistes- und Kulturwissenschaften*) with grants amounting to 7.5 million euros. Support for the humanities from the private funding sector by the Gerda Henkel Foundation is also important, because it exclusively supports projects in the humanities. In 2004, this amounted to some 4.4 million euros. These three main foundations support different areas of research with different strategies.

The VW Foundation is oriented towards programmes and interdisciplinarity. In addition to the support of individuals, this foundation supports cross-disciplinary and international co-operation and infrastructure for institutions, such as the Hanse Wissenschaftskolleg in Delmenhorst (on this point see Apitzsch and Siouti 2006: sections 3 and 4). The Fritz Thyssen Foundation supports the social sciences and humanities with different types of support: academic projects, fellowships, conferences and subsidies. A focus of the funding strategy is the special emphasis on publication subsidies (<<http://www.fritz-thyssen-stiftung.de/>>). The Foundation has different thematic focuses in its funding policy: (1) History, Language and Culture, (2) State, Economy and Society and ‘cross sections’, (3) Image and Imagery, and (4) International Relations. Even if the thematic focuses 1 and 2 here seem to imply some kind of separation between the humanities and the social sciences, the need for interdisciplinarity is explicitly stressed in the Foundation’s funding policy. In 2003, the Foundation provided a total of 11.95 million euros for project fellowships (Fritz Thyssen Foundation Annual Report 2003/ 2004: 342).

The Foundation supports projects which, under the influence of Anglo-Saxon research, could be called ‘cultural studies’ and which seek to establish interdisciplinary contact with the social sciences. Special attention is also paid to research projects which are based on co-operation with the natural sciences, particularly with the cognitive neuro-sciences. However, at the same time the Thyssen Foundation continues to support the research traditions of the ‘classical’ arts disciplines (<http://www.fritz-thyssen-stiftung.de/03foerderbereiche/geschichte_en.htm>, accessed 6.6.2005).

Both foundations want to strengthen the position of the humanities. This is illustrated by a recent new initiative (launched in 2005) of both foundations, promoting the humanities by a funding initiative called ‘Pro Humanities’ which has a particular focus on individual research. This initiative is motivated by the importance of the humanities and social sciences for the European process of unification and for the construction of a European education and research system (<<http://www.volkswagenstiftung.de/foerderung/foerderinitiativen/ku...>>, see Apitzsch and Siouti 2006: section 3).

The Gerda Henkel Foundation supports research in what it terms ‘Historical Humanities’ (*Historische Geisteswissenschaften*), especially in the fields of history,

art history, historical Islamic Studies, and history of law (<http://www.gerda-henkel-stiftung.de/content.php?nav_id=174&language=de> 4 February 2006). In 2004 the Foundation granted a total of 4,43 million euros for 247 research projects (academic projects and Ph.D. fellowships). In 2004 45,6% of the grants were in history, 24,5% in art history, 14 % in archaeology, 5,3% for interdisciplinary projects, 5,1% for ancient history, 3,4% for Islamic studies, 1,3% for the history of law and 8% for other subjects. (<http://www.gerda-henkel-stiftung.de/foerdermittel.php?nav_id=178&language=de, 4 February 2006).

1.3 The role of the EU research programmes

European Union research programmes have up until now played a very minor role in support for research in Germany in the social sciences and humanities (Wissenschaftsrat 2006: 93).² Because of the history of the programmes, European research policy with its framework programmes focuses mainly on socio-economic and technical research. Thus the ongoing 6th Framework contains, apart from the social science-oriented topic ‘Citizens and governance in a knowledge based society’, mainly natural science and technical science-oriented topics and supports these areas. The humanities are obviously excluded. The explicit support for and integration of the humanities and social sciences in the 7th Framework has been advocated at the national level by both the *Wissenschaftsrat* and the DFG (Wissenschaftsrat 2006, Winnacker 2006).

Even though it is noticeable that a lot of the projects funded under the ‘Citizens and governance in a knowledge based society’ programme have German coordinators (<http://www.europa.eu.int/comm./employments_social/socio-economic_research/docs/FP_6_synopsis.eu.pdf>), in general the European programmes have not so far been very important for national research promotion in Germany.³

1.4 Advisory bodies

Two advisory bodies are responsible for priority-setting and the coordination of strategies for science, research, and education on the national level, the *Wissenschaftsrat* and the *Bund-Länder Commission*. The *Wissenschaftsrat* is made up of representatives from the Federal Government and the state (*Länder*) governments. It is an advisory body for political decision-makers and an instrument of cooperative federalism designed to promote scientific work in Germany. The *Wissenschaftsrat* issues statements and recommendations, and prepares reports which primarily concern the two major fields of science policy: (1) ‘the scientific institutions (universities, universities of applied sciences and non-university research institutions), in particular their structure and performance, development and financing’, and (2) ‘general questions relating to the system of higher education, selected structural aspects of research and teaching as well as the strategic planning and assessment of specific fields and disciplines’ (<http://www.wissenschaftsrat.de/Aufgaben/aufg_org.htm, 8.02.06>).

² According to an expert interview conducted in January 2006 at the European liaison office of the German research organisations (KOWI).

³ According to an expert interview conducted in January 2006 at the European liaison office of the German research organisations (KOWI).

The Bund-Länder Commission For Educational Planning And Research Promotion is the ‘permanent forum for the discussion of all questions of education and research promotion which are of common interest to the Federal and the Länder governments’ (<<http://www.blk.de>, 8.2.06>).

1.5 Views on the situation in the humanities and social sciences: the political parties and the advisory board

In the following we will concentrate on the political discourse on policies towards the humanities. Our main focus is on how the political parties and the *Wissenschaftsrat* see the situation, role and future tasks of the humanities.

On 11 May 2005 a public hearing was organised by the Committee for Education, Research, and Technology Assessment (*Ausschuss für Bildung, Forschung und Technikfolgenabschätzung*) of the German *Bundestag*. The subject was the current situation of the humanities and social sciences in Germany (*Situation der Geistes-, Sozial- und Kulturwissenschaften in Deutschland*, 11 May 2005 Paul-Löbe-Haus Berlin). The objective was to strengthen the social sciences and humanities (*Geistes-, Sozial-, und Kulturwissenschaften stärken - Koalitionsfraktionen*). This discussion had been largely initiated by the *Bündnis 90/Die Grünen* member Ursula Sowa, who belonged to the Education and Research Committee (*Bildungs- und Forschungsausschuss*) of the (former) German government (cf. Gollnick 2005: 1). The idea proposed was to initiate new interdisciplinary research colleges to support young scholars working in the social sciences and humanities (ibid: 1). A panel of experts (Bredenkamp, Frühwald, Nida-Rümelin) was invited. Three main points were addressed in the hearing:

- the current situation of the disciplinary fields mentioned above,
- their importance, and
- proposals to strengthen these fields.

The *Wissenschaftsrat* (advisory body to the Federal Government and the State [*Länder*] governments) published a very detailed overview of the current situation of research in the humanities in January 2006.⁴ This paper not only describes the current situation, but also formulates recommendations for future policy concerning the humanities.

In the following we summarise and discuss the positions of Social Democratic Party (*SPD*), Alliance 90/The Greens (*Bündnis 90/Die Grünen*), and Christian Democratic Union/Christian Socialist Union (*CDU/CSU*) parties, as well as the position of the *Wissenschaftsrat* and the policies it has recommended.

1.5.1 Situation of the humanities and social sciences

In addition to a reference to conflicts (in May 2005) over federal higher education policy, all three press releases analysed by us point to recent university reform processes and social changes, together with financial problems, as major factors causing difficulties for the social sciences and humanities. The press release of

⁴ This can also be considered as a reaction to the introduction of the new ‘Excellence Initiative’ funding programme, where proposals from the humanities have not been very successful.

Bündnis 90/Die Grünen refers to the panel of experts, who maintained that the disciplines are not in crisis in methodological terms but are seriously challenged by the changes in German universities, and are coming under growing pressure to legitimate themselves in the eyes of society. Katharina Reiche, the CDU/CSU spokeswoman responsible for education and research, stated that the humanities and social sciences have difficulties in coping with the reformed university system, which is organised along criteria formulated for the application-oriented disciplines of the technical sciences. Increasingly, the humanities and social sciences are coming under pressure to legitimate themselves in terms of a comparison with the natural and technical sciences. The CDU/CSU opposition differed from the position of the government by identifying the Bologna process and the introduction of junior professorships as another challenge for these disciplines.

The *Wissenschaftsrat* too pointed to the question of legitimation regarding the humanities. Additionally, it highlighted the fact that what has been called ‘the crisis of the humanities’ is connected to a change in their role in society. The paper states that the crisis cannot be related to the actual quantity of research and teaching in the humanities (*Wissenschaftsrat* 2006: 11).

Instead, the humanities have in recent decades lost both their role as ‘national legitimation agency’ and the role they played in the 1960s and 1970s as ‘democratisation sciences’ (*Demokratisierungswissenschaften*). In the past, this gave them greater weight in the public sphere (*Wissenschaftsrat* 2006: 10).

The attempt to reformulate the *Geisteswissenschaften* as *Kulturwissenschaften* or cultural sciences, which has also been broadly discussed due to the publication in 1991 of a volume entitled *Geisteswissenschaften heute*,⁵ was also a reaction to a growing feeling that ideas implying a ‘Ganzheit’ or ‘wholeness’ of the ‘nation’ or ‘society’ were problematic. Hence ‘culture’ came to replace ‘the spirit’ (*Geist*, as in the word for the humanities, *Geisteswissenschaften*).

At the same time the reformulation as *Kulturwissenschaften* seemed again to suggest an attempt to integrate and the construction of a ‘unity’, just like the idea of *Geisteswissenschaften* (*Wissenschaftsrat* 2006: 11). The report considered developments tending to reduce the *Geisteswissenschaften* to one integrated *Kulturwissenschaft* (in the singular and not plural) to be especially problematic. In spite of some critical remarks about the concept, the paper underlines the important consequences the debate has had for interdisciplinary co-operation.

According to the *Wissenschaftsrat* new questions, problem fields and methods have led to a growing diversification in all research fields, including the humanities and social sciences. Alongside the positive aspects of this specialisation and differentiation, though, both interdisciplinary and disciplinary communication has become more difficult (*Wissenschaftsrat* 2006: 65).

The report comes back several times to the question of how interdisciplinary work relates to communication within the disciplines. A differentiation inside the disciplines and at the same time a diminished communication between these different fields might endanger the ‘continuity of a discipline’ (*Wissenschaftsrat* 2006: 66).

⁵ Frühwald, Wolfgang, et al. (1991) *Geisteswissenschaften heute: eine Denkschrift*. Frankfurt/ Main. For this debate, see also Krebs, Rebecca, Irini Siouti, Ursula Apitzsch and Silke Wenk (2005) *Disciplinary Boundaries between the Social Sciences and Humanities: National Report on Germany*. <www.hull.ac.uk/researchintegration>.

This can be regarded as problematic, especially concerning the situation of the next generation of researchers. A possible answer to the process of diversification was formulated with the concept of *Kulturwissenschaften* or cultural studies. This debate on the reform of the German humanities has had a considerable effect on the development of the humanities in the last 15 years, especially interdisciplinary co-operation. Regarding the question of interdisciplinarity in the humanities, the report identifies some clear successes in establishing interdisciplinary co-operation. Structures for interdisciplinary co-operation have been set up to address such themes as memory, knowledge, institutions, the media, and symbolic communication (*Wissenschaftsrat* 2006: 67). This research has often been carried out in Collaborative Research Centres funded by the DFG. Therefore, the *Wissenschaftsrat* considers the debate about *Kulturwissenschaften* to have been fruitful for interdisciplinary work in the humanities.

The visibility of the humanities has been strengthened by these interdisciplinary activities, as the cooperative research programmes resulted for example in many more public conferences as big research entities are more 'visible'. The conferences have mostly been documented in series of publications or edited volumes which, as the *Wissenschaftsrat* criticises, do not receive much attention in the respective disciplinary communities. Consequently, they fear that instead of integrating the fragmented disciplines, which was one intention of the concept of *Kulturwissenschaften*, it might fragment the humanities even more.

1.5.2 The importance of the humanities: different political views on their function

Of course, both the press release of the (former) government coalition and that of the (former) opposition underline the importance of the disciplinary fields of the social sciences and humanities. But while the SPD and *Bündnis 90/Die Grünen* stress the importance of these disciplines in resolving current social problems, the CDU/CSU refers to the national tradition of the humanities and their relevance for an international German cultural policy. Thus we can note a striking difference. The press release of the SPD states that the social sciences and humanities can make a significant contribution to meeting the social challenges posed by globalisation. They underline especially the need to strengthen research on women and gender, on peace and conflict, on migration and integration, and on higher education. *Bündnis 90/Die Grünen* consider these disciplinary fields important, defining the role of the humanities and social sciences as a 'seismograph' of social developments as they are an instrument for the self-understanding of society. Like the SPD, they see the social sciences and humanities as necessary to cope with questions concerning the future of society.

The argument of the opposition differs noticeably from the rather similar positions of SPD and Greens. Their press release underlines the notion of national tradition, seeing Germany as the 'classical' country of the humanities and stressing the importance of the humanities for '*auswärtige Kulturpolitik*' or 'international cultural policy'. (However, the press release of *Bündnis 90/Die Grünen* also points to the potential of Germany as a '*Kultur- und Bildungsnation*' or 'nation of culture and learning'.) The differences between the (former) government and the (former) opposition seem to suggest differing concepts of these disciplinary fields, which may influence future research policies.

The *Wissenschaftsrat* defines the task of the humanities in the future as follows: ‘The future of the humanities can be seen in research which works in a methodologically conscious way, arguing with historical precision, communicating this to society and at the same time helping to constitute society.’⁶ (*Wissenschaftsrat* 2006: 12)

1.5.3 Proposed strategies to strengthen the social sciences and humanities: (inter)disciplinarity and recommended changes

In the hearing, all three parties underlined the need to work in an interdisciplinary way. The SPD press release called for more networking between the different disciplines, an enforcement of interdisciplinary co-operation with the natural sciences, and a stronger coordination of the small disciplines (SPD-BT-8 www.spdfraktion.de, 11 May 2005). The press release of *Bündnis 90/Die Grünen* (<http://www.gruene-fraktion.de/cms/presse/dok/68/68405-print.htm>) reported that two major targets have been articulated for a research policy regarding the humanities and social sciences:

- to maintain small disciplines and degree courses, and
- to establish Institutes of Advanced Study or ‘research colleges’

(*Forschungskollegs*).

The press release of the CDU/CSU differs only slightly from the positions of the SPD and *Bündnis 90/Die Grünen*.

Like the SPD, the CDU/CSU underlined the need to work in an interdisciplinary way and to cooperate with different disciplines. Although the reform process initiated by the Bologna process means a challenge to the structures and traditions of these disciplinary fields, according to the CDU/CSU these processes could promote new co-operation between different disciplinary cultures and could prepare graduates better for their professional life.

Departing from the positions described above, the CDU/CSU underlines the need for the social sciences and humanities to increase the professionalizing of students and to intensify the relationship between universities and the economy, so that graduates will be better integrated into a profession after completing their degrees. They argue that the humanities and social sciences need to become more visible in their participation in a public ‘social discourse’. The CDU/CSU demands the following:

- continued support for the Humanities Research Centres financed by the DFG after 2007,
- a review of the usefulness of introducing Institutes of Advanced Studies or *Wissenschaftskollegs* (a proposal of the government coalition),

-the further development of the *Akademienprogramm*. HERE A BULLET POINT IS MISSING

In addition to these political positions, which suggest the introduction of a new form of research programme, the *Wissenschaftsrat* goes into more detail concerning the question of what sort of funding strategy would meet the specific needs of the humanities.

⁶*Die Zukunft der Geisteswissenschaften liegt im Bereich der Forschung in einer methodologisch bewussten, historisch präzise argumentierenden, gesellschaftlich kommunizierbaren und zugleich die Gesellschaft mitkonstituierenden Forschung.*

The *Wissenschaftsrat* formulates more concrete ideas about interdisciplinarity and relates this to its proposal for the future of the humanities. Related to the changes towards interdisciplinary co-operation (a result also of the debate about *Kulturwissenschaften*), the *Wissenschaftsrat* specifies its idea of useful interdisciplinary work as follows: 'Interdisciplinary work in a narrow sense should have as a starting point a problem which can be fruitfully analysed by different disciplines, which all are able to identify it and work on it from their perspective.'⁷ (*Wissenschaftsrat* 2006: 68). Interdisciplinary themes should not be understood as a 'roof' under which disciplines interact in a 'superficial' way, the *Wissenschaftsrat* comments critically (*Wissenschaftsrat* 2006: 67). Nor should interdisciplinary work be understood as an 'orientation of different disciplinary discourses towards one general problem' (ibid: 68).

Generally, the *Wissenschaftsrat* considers current communication between interdisciplinary and disciplinary discourses as problematic. Consequently it calls for improved communication *within* the disciplines to integrate interdisciplinary discussions. Referring to interdisciplinary fields directed towards a cultural studies discourse, it states that these tend to develop their own autonomous research fields which do not connect with the respective disciplinary fields.

Regarding the younger generation of students and future researchers, a further fragmentation of the humanities and an early focus on cultural studies 'may push the imparting of disciplinary methods into the background', whereas disciplinary methods are considered by the *Wissenschaftsrat* as the 'fundament', on which students 'can base their further scientific or practical training' (*Wissenschaftsrat* 2006: 68).

Concluding its section on 'Disciplinary differentiation and scientific communication' (*Wissenschaftsrat* 2006: 64-70), the *Wissenschaftsrat* concentrates on recommendations for communication in the disciplines. They demand of the disciplinary associations (*Fachgesellschaften*) that they should 'agree on disciplinary standards' (*Verständigung über disziplinäre Standards* that is, common standards and key competences. Further, they recommend the intensification of self-reflection and communication on research findings in the disciplines through the establishment of journals which integrate the different parts and could connect interdisciplinary and disciplinary research findings.

The *Wissenschaftsrat* now considers that the disciplinary structures in universities are not necessarily a hindrance for such interdisciplinary research. This represents a change from the views stated in 1994. With regard to favourable research policies, the *Wissenschaftsrat* recommends funding programmes which promote individual and cooperative forms of research and ideally combine the two (*Wissenschaftsrat* 2006: 88), as both working methods have their special advantages for research in the humanities. The paper points out the specificities of the humanities in this regard (*Wissenschaftsrat* 2006: 86). The paper suggests as a new programme format *Forschungskollegs*, similar to Anglo-Saxon 'Institutes of Advanced Research', which could combine the advantages of individual and cooperative research.

Concerning the funding of research programmes in the humanities, the *Wissenschaftsrat* makes three recommendations (2006: 94-96): Research in the humanities should not be primarily measured in terms of its direct social relevance. Even if the humanities are able to and should participate in the discussion of socially

⁷'Interdisziplinäres Arbeiten im engeren Sinne setzt vielmehr ein Problem voraus, das seine wissenschaftliche Fruchtbarkeit dadurch gewinnt, dass es aus der Perspektive unterschiedlicher Disziplinen als Forschungsgegenstand erkannt und bearbeitet werden kann.'

relevant questions, this also requires ‘basic research’, which has its ‘own value’ (as in the natural sciences). If research programmes formulate thematic focal points, these should be developed in a dialogue with academe. The most important criteria for selection should remain quality and relevance and not be ‘pressed’ into the form of an abstract research programme.

One important task for the humanities is research on and the documentation of the cultural heritage. This could be a field where European co-operation would be very useful. Generally, the paper calls for the opening of the European research programmes to research in the humanities.

Summarising, we can note that the *Wissenschaftsrat* paid particular attention to the relationship between disciplinarity and interdisciplinarity. Secondly, the advisory board underlined the specific needs and value of the humanities in relation to funding policy for research programmes.

1.6 Conclusions

Third party research funding income in the social sciences and humanities has, in general, increased in recent years. At the same time, funding for coordinated interdisciplinary programmes has increased in both the national and the private funding sector. Grants for coordinated interdisciplinary and/or cross-disciplinary programmes doubled between 1990 and 2003. Thus, interdisciplinarity is obviously formally required and present as a trend in the research funding landscape. However, this has happened more for pragmatic than for programmatic reasons. The small disciplines in particular are often involved in coordinated programmes for capacity reasons, to increase the chances that the project will be funded and because they are under increasing economic pressure. (See section 2) Even if interdisciplinarity is formally present in the programmes, this does not necessarily mean that it is realised in research practice.

A new tendency which can be observed in research policy is an articulation of the specific problems of the humanities. They have been supported through explicit measures and thematically open (not necessarily interdisciplinary-orientated) programmes funded by both the national research foundation and the private foundations. At the same time the demand for praxis-oriented research or applicability is increasingly being addressed to the social sciences, especially by the private funding sector.

In general, there is a tendency at the policy level to strengthen interdisciplinarity, especially in the form of co-operation between the social sciences and humanities on the one hand and the natural sciences on the other, but not between the social sciences and the humanities. Interdisciplinarity between the social sciences and the humanities is not explicitly required at the policy level.

2 DFG – the German Research Foundation

The predominant national research foundation in Germany is the German Research Foundation *Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG)*. It is ‘the central self-governing organisation of science and research in Germany’ (www.dfg.de/en/dfg_profile/structure/index.html, 17 August 2005) and promotes research at universities and other publicly financed research institutions.⁸ The *Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft* is financed partly by the *Bund* and partly by the different federal *Länder* (states). The DFG is the most important source for externally funded projects for the Humanities and Social Sciences. (www.dfg.de/info:wissenschaftler/gw/einfuehrung.html, see also Bundesbericht Forschung 2004: 356). The *DFG* serves all branches of the social sciences and the humanities by funding research projects and facilitating co-operation between researchers. The *DFG* also supports young academics and international institutional co-operation.

Out of the 266 funded Collaborative Research Centres, 35 projects (or 13, 2%) are in the humanities and social sciences. (www.dfg.de/forschungsfoerderung/koordinierte_programme/... 27 January 2006). In comparison: 41, 3 % was spent on medicine and biotechnology, 25, 6 % on the natural sciences and 19, 9 % on the technical sciences. (ibid.) In the interviews conducted, one of the two program directors pointed out that research funding has increased in the humanities: in 1991 there were only 19 funded Collaborative Research Centres in the humanities and social sciences.

2.1 Different initiatives of the DFG

The *DFG* supports different forms of coordinated programmes: Research Units, Priority Programmes, Research Training Groups, Collaborative Research Centres, *DFG* Research Centres, Humanities Research Centres and as a new funding form, the Excellence Initiative (see section 1). The question of interdisciplinarity is essential for the organisation of the Research Training Groups and the Collaborative Research Centres. Research Training Groups (*Graduiertenkollegs*) are strongly connected to the idea of research, as the definition of the *DFG* website shows: ‘Research Training Groups are combined research and study programmes established at German universities for a limited time period for the purpose of promoting young researchers. Research Training Groups afford doctoral students the opportunity to complete their doctorates within a coordinated research programme.’ (www.dfg.de/en/research_funding/coordinated_programmes/ 27 January 2006) They are initiated and financed by the *DFG* to support young researchers. The concept of the Research Training Groups is influenced by the Anglo-American model of postgraduate studies. But, differing from other national contexts, where this organisational form is not regarded as research, in the German context these groups combine training and research and are especially interested in interdisciplinarity. The Research Training Groups demand collaborations between several faculties. The idea is to cross disciplinary borders and to support interdisciplinarity (Wissenschaftsrat 1994: 4ff). The goal of Research Training Groups is to promote highly qualified

⁸ www.dfg.de

scientists and researchers and to prepare doctoral students for positions in interdisciplinary and international research contexts.

Next to these doctoral programmes there are long-term research programmes at universities in which researchers collaborate within cross-disciplinary programmes. Important institutions are the Collaborative Research Centres (*Sonderforschungsbereiche, SFB*), research programmes at one university (sometimes in co-operation with a few other universities) funded for up to 12 years. There are also smaller forms of research projects such as the Priority Programmes (*Schwerpunktprogramme*) and Research Units (*Forschergruppen*). There are different forms of Collaborative Research Centres; one is the Cultural Study⁹ Research Centre (*SFB/FK*), which reflects the debates of the last decades on the German *Geisteswissenschaften* (Cf. Krebs, Rebecca; Siouti, Irini; Apitzsch, Ursula and Silke Wenk (2005) section 6 and Krebs, Rebecca and Silke Wenk (2005) section 2.2).

In 1996 the *DFG* established six Humanities Research Centres (*Geisteswissenschaftliche Zentren*) in the new federal states, continuing existing research projects in the humanities, with the target of developing interdisciplinary, cooperative, project-oriented, international research in the Humanities with a focus on Cultural Studies¹⁰. ‘Humanities Research Centres in Eastern Germany serve to promote and develop interdisciplinary, collaborative and project-oriented research in the humanities with an additional focus on cultural studies and international co-operation. Centres are established for a specific time period and are run by, or in co-operation with, one or more universities.’ (www.dfg.de/en/research_funding/coordinated_programmes/ 3 June 2005)

2.1.1 Collaborative Research Centres as interdisciplinary research centres

The *DFG* defines Collaborative Research Programmes as follows: ‘Collaborative Research centres are long-term university research centres in which scientists and academics pursue ambitious joint interdisciplinary undertakings. This funding instrument aims to create core research focus at universities.’

(www.dfg.de/en/research-funding/cordinated_programmes/ 3 June 2005)

The programme is meant to sharpen ‘the research profile of those universities successful in constituting highly qualified, cooperating research communities in their midst’ (Leaflet for the proposal for a Collaborative Research Centre,

DFG-Vordrucke 60.04e-1/05. 27 January 2006

<www.dfg.de/forschungsfoerderung/formulare/download/60_00e.pdf>).

The main aims which have to be fulfilled are therefore the concentration of research at one university, research which should ‘meet high scientific standards’, should

⁹ This is the translation used by the *DFG*. Nevertheless we should keep in mind, that there can be a difference between the concept and idea of *Kulturwissenschaften* which has been discussed in the last 15 years in Germany and the tradition of the Anglo-Saxon Cultural Studies, predominantly connected to the Birmingham School and originating in the 1960s.

¹⁰ ‘Die Einrichtung von Geisteswissenschaftlichen Zentren in den neuen Bundesländern dient nach Empfehlungen des Wissenschaftsrates der Förderung und der Entwicklung interdisziplinärer, kooperativer, projektorientierter sowie kulturwissenschaftlich und international ausgerichteter Forschung in den Geisteswissenschaften’. *DFG, Jahresbericht 2002: 1, DFG „Perspektiven der Forschung und ihrer Förderung 2002-2006“*: 72.

promote young scientists and enhance the ‘co-operation across the boundaries of disciplines, institutes, departments and faculties’. (cf. Leaflet for the proposal a Collaborative Research Centre, DFG-Vordrucke 60.04e-1/05. 27 January 2006 <www.dfg.de/forschungsfoerderung/formulare/download/60_00e.pdf>)

The co-operation of the Research Centre with other universities on a national and international level and with the private sector is welcomed by the *DFG*.

2.1.2 Cultural Studies Research Centres

The Cultural Studies Research Centres are a variation of the Collaborative Research Centres:

Cultural Studies Research Centres have to meet certain thematic and structural criteria. The research must be cross-disciplinary and international in terms of thematic focus and co-operation and must encourage advancing young researchers by offering special study programmes.

(www.dfg.de/en/research_funding/coordinated_programmes/collab... 3 June 2005)

At first sight there seem to be only slight differences between the descriptions of the Cultural Studies Research Centres (*FK/SFB*) and the Collaborative Research Centres (*SFB*). The Cultural Studies Research Centre has to be ‘cross-disciplinary’ whereas in the case of the *SFB* ‘joint interdisciplinary undertakings’ are mentioned. In both programmes the promotion of young researchers as well as internationalisation are mentioned as additional aims. With regard to the distinction between ‘interdisciplinary’ (*interdisziplinär*) and ‘cross-disciplinary’ (*transdisziplinär*) our interview partner from the *DFG* stated that in practice it is difficult and not very useful to differentiate between these two terms:

You know, within theoretical science it is possible to distinguish between inter- and transdisciplines [...] but in practice the way the programmes should of course be oriented, it is very difficult to differentiate. [...] And there, where you say, one should cross disciplinary boundaries, perhaps even create a new disciplinary field, such a thing – this is now my personal conviction – cannot be prescribed, by saying: ‘Look, now there exist no boundaries anymore.’ Instead it has to evolve.¹¹

This conviction seems to be symptomatic for the funding practice of the *DFG* concerning interdisciplinarity. Our interview partners stated that the criterion of quality is essential. They underlined that innovations, particularly in the field of interdisciplinarity are appreciated, but have to come out of the **academia** and cannot be prescribed in a top-down procedure (see further 2.2.2 for more explanations on the programme policy concerning interdisciplinarity).

Two main reasons can be given for the specific variation found in the Cultural Studies Centre which was established in 1999: a) strengthening the opening of the

¹¹ ‘Ja, wissen Sie, natürlich kann man das wissenschaftstheoretisch unterscheiden, was Inter- und Transdisziplinarität ist [...], aber in der Praxis und an der sollten sich natürlich auch solche Programme orientieren, ist das natürlich überaus schwierig. [...] Und da wo Sie sagen, man muss die Fächergrenzen überwinden und vielleicht sogar so, dass da ein neues Fach entsteht, auch so etwas, und das ist jetzt meine ganz persönliche Überzeugung, kann nicht verordnet werden, indem man sagt ‚So, jetzt sind diese Grenzen nicht mehr da‘, sondern das muss entstehen.’

Geisteswissenschaften, to the innovative impulse of the debate on the *Kulturwissenschaften* and b) promoting the specific format of the Research Centres in the humanities.

The first reason was referred to in a paper of a closed meeting dedicated to the question of strengthening research in the humanities organised by the *DFG* in 2003. (“*Neue Akzente für die Förderung geisteswissenschaftlicher Forschung*“ 2003: 17. acc. 23 May 2005 <www.dfg.de/aktuelles_presse/download/foerderinitiative_gw_tagung.pdf>) The second reason was the aim to increase the interest of the humanities to apply for large-scale third-party funding for research projects as one of our interview partners from the *DFG* explained.

With regard to these initial points the *DFG* considers the Cultural Studies Research Centres four years later as not very useful anymore and needing to be modified, a view which was both expressed in the paper from the conference in Maria Laach in 2003 (“*Neue Akzente für die Förderung geisteswissenschaftlicher Forschung*” 2003: 14) and in our recent interview in the autumn of 2005. The view expressed in the paper from the meeting on ‘New Accents for the funding of research in the humanities’ (“*Neue Akzente für die Förderung geisteswissenschaftlicher Forschung*”) among other things reflects the development and role of the Cultural Studies Research Centre in the specific context of the German debate on *Geisteswissenschaften* versus *Kulturwissenschaften*. The *DFG* paper stated, that neither the ‘programme was received in a satisfactory way’¹² (“*Neue Akzente für die Förderung geisteswissenschaftlicher Forschung*“ 2003: 17. 23 May 2005 <www.dfg.de/aktuelles_presse/download/foerderinitiative_gw_tagung.pdf>), nor that the variation of the Cultural Studies Research Centre could ‘be sufficiently distinguished from the programme of the Collaborative Research Centres’¹³ (ibid.: 17) (www.dfg.de/aktuelles_presse/download/foerderinitiative_gw_tagung.de, 23 May 2005).

In conclusion, the paper highlights the problems of the programmatic goals of this specific research format which is meant to ‘sustain a paradigmatic change towards the so-called ‘*Kulturwissenschaften*’¹⁴ (ibid.: 17). The paper states that no sufficient definition of ‘the’ *Kulturwissenschaften* can be made (even after 15 years of debates on this aspect in the German humanities). Therefore, according to the experts gathered at the meeting in Maria Laach, the aim of a ‘*kulturwissenschaftliche*’ focus cannot be reached in a ‘top-down’ procedure.¹⁵ (ibid.: 17)

Like the published summary of the discussion in Maria Laach, one of the *DFG* programme directors who was interviewed stated that the research carried out in the Cultural Studies Research Centres does not differ greatly from the Collaborative Research Centres and therefore could also be funded in the *SFB* programme. Accordingly, our interview partner spoke of an ‘artificial division’. He also pointed to the fact that such a division makes it more difficult to promote interdisciplinarity

¹² ‘dass das Programm nicht in einem befriedigendem Maße angenommen wurde’

¹³ ‘eine deutliche Abgrenzung, die zu den Sonderforschungsbereichen herkömmlicher Art nicht eingelöst wurde’

¹⁴ ‘einen Beitrag zum kulturwissenschaftlichen Paradigmenwechsel’

¹⁵ ‘Wie ‘*Kulturwissenschaften*’ im Unterschied zu den *Geisteswissenschaften* eigentlich zu definieren sind, welche programmatischen Ziele die *Kulturwissenschaften* verfolgen, über diese und ähnliche Fragen gibt es auch nach gut 15 Jahren intensiver Auseinandersetzung in den *Geisteswissenschaften* kein konsensfähiges Ergebnis, das für ein thematische Top-Down-Vorgabe eines Forschungsförderungsprogramms tatsächlich belastbar wäre.’

between the humanities and other disciplinary fields. The Collaborative Research Centre is an established programme, which has a good reputation in disciplinary fields such as the natural sciences, a disciplinary field more distanced from the humanities than the social sciences. He stated that the initial Cultural Studies Centre has become superfluous as it was meant as ‘publicity’ to increasingly integrate the humanities within the coordinated programmes such as those in the Collaborative Research Centres. The participation of the humanities in funding programmes of the *DFG* has increased over the years (presumably due not only to initiatives of the *FK/SFB* but also to the increasing pressure on these disciplinary fields to acquire third-party funding).

With regard to our interests, this programme is particularly important as a result of the debates of the last decade on innovation within the humanities. It can be analysed as an opening up towards other fields of knowledge, as the *DFG* meeting acknowledged:

Still, ‘*Kulturwissenschaften*’ not used in the sense of a synonym for ‘*Geisteswissenschaften*’ means start in terms of the humanities to overcome traditional thinking, to cooperate across disciplinary boundaries, and find points of contact with the Natural Sciences.¹⁶

(“*Neue Akzente für die Förderung geisteswissenschaftlicher Forschung*“: 17. 23 May 2005

www.dfg.de/aktuelles_presse/download/foerderinitiative_gw_tagung.de.)

2.1.3 Review procedure for both the Collaborative Research Centre and the Cultural Studies Research Centre

Before a university submits a proposal it can consult the *DFG* for advice. Following this consultation phase, the project submits a proposal for a phase lasting several years (3 to 4 years in the case of Collaborative Research Centres). Before the funding proposal is submitted, the project will be evaluated internally. This evaluation is organised by the *DFG*. The evaluation is conducted by a panel of peer-reviewers. The peer review of the proposal is essential as it ‘is the basis for the annual funding decisions of the Grants Committee for Collaborative Research Centres.’ (cf. Leaflet for the proposal for a Collaborative Research Centre, *DFG-Vordrucke* 60.04e-1/05 27 January 2006 <www.dfg.de/forschungsfoerderung/formulare/download/60_00e.pdf>). This Grants Committee (*Bewilligungsausschuss*) consists of scholars appointed by the *DFG* Senate and of representatives of the federal and state ministries. In the review process peers participate only in an honorary role. The review panel has to be recruited from all disciplines, which have submitted the proposal.

The peers are selected by the different disciplinary experts of the panel Social Sciences and Humanities (*Fachgruppe Sozial- und Geisteswissenschaften*). Thus, the humanities and the social sciences are in one panel. One of the interview partners pointed out that the most important task of the disciplinary experts is to select the peer reviewers. In cases of interdisciplinary proposals all the respective responsible disciplinary experts from the ‘*Gruppe Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaften*’ participate

¹⁶ ‘Dort, wo der Begriff *Kulturwissenschaften* heute nicht als Synonym für die *Geisteswissenschaften* Verwendung findet, steht er gleichwohl immer noch für einen Aufbruch in den *Geisteswissenschaften*, die herkömmlichen Denkmuster zu überwinden, über die traditionellen Disziplinschranken hinaus zu kooperieren und Anknüpfungsmöglichkeiten mit den *Naturwissenschaften* zu ergründen.’

in the consulting process of selecting the reviewers. If after four years a prolongation is wanted, the project has to be reviewed again during a two-day site visit.

The way in which peer reviewers are chosen remains a mixture of informal and formal criteria. One *DFG* interview partner spoke of a 'know-how' ('*Erfahrungswissen*') in selecting peer reviewers. The main criterion for the selection of the *DFG* reviewers is their reputation. The question of prior interdisciplinary experience is less important. Criteria for academic quality are, as the *DFG* puts it, academic merits, i.e. prizes or funding by, for example, the *DFG* and also important publication activities.

Additionally our interview partners highlighted that the responsible disciplinary expert (*Fachreferent*) in the *DFG* decides not by himself but also consults academic disciplinary representatives (*Fachkollegien*), who have been elected by the respective disciplinary academic community in Germany¹⁷. 'These bodies are meant to function as a supervisory body, [...] which should guarantee that the peer review uses reliable and equal standards in the disciplines and over time regarding the selection and result.'¹⁸

The disciplinary representatives not only have to agree to the selection of peer reviewers but participate in the on-site evaluation of the proposed Research Centre too.

2.2 Policy of the *DFG*

2.2.1 Research policy regarding the actual situation of research in the humanities

The relationship between research policy, the situation and position of the humanities and the changing role of the university in the context of society was the explicit subject of the *DFG* in 2003. Debates were initiated by the *Förderinitiative Geisteswissenschaften* (cf. *Jahresbericht DFG* 2003, 51 ff.) concerning these issues. An internal conference led to the (above mentioned) recommendations entitled '*Neue Akzente für die Förderung geisteswissenschaftlicher Forschung*' decided in May 2003.

One main subject of this initiative and discussion was the question of what are the specific needs of the humanities, and to what extent do funding policies have to change their policy to respond to these needs. The second main aspect was the increased competition of the universities for third party finance, which poses new problems and circumstances especially for the humanities. (Cf. Ratteicke *Einblicke. Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaften in der DFG* 2003: 154) Other changes or better modifications were proposed (*Einblicke. Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaften in der DFG* 2003: 155 ff.):

- apart from the big research projects, the so-called '*Sonderforschungsbereiche*' (see 1.1) there should be smaller stronger cooperative structures of a couple of researchers at one university to strengthen the profile of the university

¹⁷ The *Fachkollegien* are disciplinary groups who are elected by the respective disciplinary community every four years. Every academic member of the German universities, given they have concluded their doctoral work and have worked for at least two years at a German university is entitled to vote

¹⁸ '*Die sind sozusagen eine Qualitätskontrollinstanz, [...] dass in der Auswahl und im Ergebnis der Begutachtung verlässlich gleichmäßige Maßstäbe über die Fächer und über die Zeit gelten.*'

- networking of junior researchers under a specific theme, cooperating nationally and internationally with other researchers
- projects should be long enough, as for some research topics more time is needed and long-term perspectives need to be planned (*'Zeit- und Planungsperspektive'*). These long-lasting projects have to fulfil even higher standards of relevance and success
- the aspect of the individual researcher should be recognised as especially relevant in the humanities. The individual researcher should be permitted to apply for more time for his/her research also as a project coordinator.

Alongside various reflections on the future role and situation of the humanities, a book was published entitled *Einblicke-Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaften in der DFG*. It presents the various examples of research activities of the *DFG* in the field of the humanities. (*DFG Jahresbericht 2003*: 54)

With regard to the question of interdisciplinarity, the *DFG* paper states that the humanities are constrained more than other disciplinary fields to cooperate across disciplinary boundaries because of their small size. This was also mentioned by one of our interview partners. On the other hand, the paper points to characteristics of the humanities which necessitate exchanges, as this disciplinary field might be briefly described with the key word 'discursive'. This means, that in a bigger research context it might be difficult to preserve this kind of communication (*'Neue Akzente für die Förderung geisteswissenschaftlicher Forschung'*: 13. 23 May 2005 www.dfg.de/aktuelles_presse/download/foerderinitiative_gw_tagung.de.)

One interview partner from the *DFG* referred to the initiative and described it as intending to highlight 'the qualitative aspects of these disciplines'¹⁹. The reason for this specific focus was that the general funding policy and decisions are mostly oriented towards 'measurable, comparable and quantitative elements'.

These are important aspects which lead us to ask how interdisciplinarity in the humanities and social sciences is seen by the *DFG*. They point to the general question of how far one can speak of specific forms of interdisciplinarity in the humanities and social sciences.

2.2.2 Policy of the *DFG* concerning the question of interdisciplinarity

The different aspects which are decisive for the policy of the *DFG* are:

- their view of the social sciences and humanities and their disciplinary specificities
- their understanding of disciplinarity and interdisciplinarity
- their assessment, under which circumstances interdisciplinarity can be realised
- their main funding goals concerning the programme
- how this policy is practised within the review process.

When asked how the disciplinary boundaries between the social sciences and humanities are seen in the panel of the humanities and social sciences, the interview partner (part of this panel) said, that this is not a very significant division. Accordingly he stated: 'but our experience is also, that if you look more closely'²⁰,

¹⁹ 'die qualitativen Aspekte dieser Fächer'

²⁰ 'aber unsere Erfahrung ist auch, dass bei näherem Hinsehen'

[...] one discovers many more specific divisions, than "the two big monolithic blocks"²¹.

Generally the view expressed in the interviews described both disciplinary fields as discursive. Therefore the disciplinary boundaries in the humanities and in the social sciences are defined by terminologies: 'One term is defined in one discipline in a certain way and consequently the discipline is characterised by it. That is the boundary of a discipline, where you agree more or less on the meaning of a term.'²² Accordingly one interview partner and programme director stated that this particular characteristic renders the work in coordinated programmes more difficult. Still, over the last few years he had seen a growing willingness to communicate about these terminological and disciplinary differences: 'The willingness has grown to embark on the terminology of the others, to find a pragmatic approach and first to acknowledge, that a sociologist constructs another system than the historian.'²³

Concerning the question of interdisciplinarity our *DFG* interview partners pointed to the theme of disciplines as 'social constructs' more than anything else. This means from their point of view there exist also huge differences within one discipline. Accordingly research carried out in one discipline could be considered as 'interdisciplinary'. The general tone of our interview partners regarding this question was that the *DFG* has to carefully consider each proposed case.

According to our *DFG* interview partner interdisciplinarity can be realised especially under three circumstances:

- first, an important aspect in the social sciences and humanities could be the discourse on terminology²⁴
- secondly, this needs the willingness of the individuals to speak with researchers from other disciplines, 'to read and perceive other things', a process which could generate new findings
- thirdly, a very pragmatic condition for the success of this kind of interdisciplinary work is that the research project should have a common space, where there is a possibility to meet frequently (see our section on the research project in Cologne).

Concerning the funding policy regarding the Collaborative Research Centres and their variations, the interviewed programme directors seemed quite open towards interdisciplinarity and described the programme as an incentive to foster this. However, it was not seen as *the* essential criterion for the success of a proposal. Several times the *DFG* interview partners underlined that neither interdisciplinarity nor disciplinarity are values per se (nonetheless 'crossing disciplinary barriers' or 'joint interdisciplinary undertakings' are mentioned in the proposal guidelines). Interdisciplinarity is 'a goal', as one interview partner said, but has to evolve out of the research question and subject.

²¹ 'als die zwei großen monolithischen Blöcke'

²² 'Ein bestimmter Begriff ist in einem bestimmten Fach definiert und das zeichnet dann auch das Fach aus. Da ist dann auch die Fachgrenze, wo man sich über einen Begriff so halbwegs sich einig ist.'

²³ 'Die Bereitschaft, sich auf die Begrifflichkeiten anderer einzulassen, einen pragmatischen Zugang zu finden, erst mal zu sehen, ein Soziologe zeichnet nun mal etwas anderes als System als ein Historiker, die ist sehr viel stärker gewachsen.'

²⁴ The interview partners underlined that this is not required by the *DFG* in an abstract way, but that the proposals often formulate this as a goal set by them and therefore it is part of the review process.

The *SFB* as the biggest research programme of the *DFG* is meant to sustain new and excellent research, whether or not it is interdisciplinary. The *DFG* does not want to establish a so-called ‘dogma’ and they understand interdisciplinarity as a form of research, which has to be pursued by the academics and cannot be imposed as an abstract aim by the *DFG*. Still they consider it as a plus, if a proposal includes interdisciplinarity.

2.3 Conclusions

The point which is essential with regard to the policy of the *DFG* is that the initiative to pursue interdisciplinarity has to come from the ‘academic community’. This can be explained by understanding it as a self-governed research foundation representing the standards and values of the academic community:

- The funding programmes of the *DFG* are really characterised by being filled with life [by the interest of the disciplines] [...]. And we now see our task, well here in the head office, in the preparation and in particular and if we are permitted to speak on behalf of the panels, to make offers and check out what the various academic disciplines really want. It has to be filled with life by the various disciplines.²⁵

The policy of the *DFG* is put in practice through their selection process of project proposals. The peer reviews of a project are decisive in the evaluation of the proposals. The reviewers consist of academics from universities (see section 2.1.3), chosen by the research foundation. Every discipline participating in the proposal has to be represented in the reviewer group.

The structure of the *DFG* is multidisciplinary as all disciplines operate under one umbrella. Final decisions on proposals are made by a committee (*Bewilligungsausschuß*), which always consists of different disciplines. Additionally, on the level of reviewing, all representatives of the various disciplines have to agree on the project as a whole, if the proposal itself is interdisciplinary. (Nevertheless disciplinary perspectives are very influential as well, cf. section 3.)

As the peer review is central for the success or failure of a proposal, it is interesting to look at both the peer reviewer and the disciplinary representatives concerning our question of interdisciplinarity. The assumption could be that peer reviewers might be a danger for parts of the proposal, which are ‘on the border’ and not at the core of disciplinary questions. However, this was not noted as a likely problem at the programme level (interview with the *DFG*). When asked if a possible conflict can appear between interdisciplinary concepts and the disciplinary view of the reviewers, our *DFG* interview partners said no. One of our two *DFG* interview partners highlighted the aspect of change in academic habits and thinking. With regard to the attitude of the peer reviewer, he noticed a move towards more openness. One interviewed senior researcher from the research projects described the role of the disciplinary representatives (*Fachkollegien*) in the *DFG* as a kind of corrective

²⁵ ‚Die Förderprogramme der *DFG* zeichnen sich ja dadurch aus [...], das ist das Spezifikum der *DFG*, dass das wirklich von der Nachfrage lebt und unsere Aufgabe sehen wir nun darin, also hier in der Geschäftsstelle, in der Vorbereitung, aber vor allem, wir dürfen dann auch vielleicht für die Gremien sprechen, darin die Angebote zu machen, reinzuhören in die Fächer, was möchten die eigentlich. Aber das muss aus den Fächern mit Leben gefüllt werden.‘

influence which reduces the risk of a very limited view on only one research area.

This might occur if just reliant upon the peer reviewers.

Some of the professors we interviewed in the research projects had been reviewers of other *SFB* and seemed to have open views on the question of interdisciplinarity. How strict the disciplinary standards of the review process are, depends on the individual reviewer. However, at the project level, one interview partner mentioned the question of disciplinary peer reviewers as a possible danger for interdisciplinary proposals. Other interview partners from the projects did not mention problems in proposing interdisciplinary questions in the context of the peer review organised by the DFG.

3 Interdisciplinary practice in the *SFB* Gießen

The **Collaborative Research Centre** (*Sonderforschungsbereich – SFB 434*) of **Memory Cultures** at the University of Gießen ‘is concerned with the analysis of form and content of cultural memory ranging from antiquity up until the 20th century.’

(www.uni-giessen.de/erinnerungskulturen/home/sfb-concept.php, 3 June 2005)

The Research Centre embraces both the humanities and the social sciences. From the **nine different departments in the humanities and social studies**, several disciplines take part here. These include: history, classical, oriental, German and English philologies, art history, philosophy, politics and social studies.²⁶ In the description of the project, the historical sciences are closely related to the social sciences as both of them adopt a ‘practical perspective’. This is contrasted with a more ‘form-oriented’ perspective (www.uni-giessen.de/erinnerungskulturen/home/sfb-concept.php, 3 January 2006).

This division suggests the role of the historical disciplines as disciplines ‘in-between’, as they are often related to and subsumed by the humanities. The historical disciplines can be seen as bridging disciplines.

The main research takes place at the University of Gießen and involves 19 professors and 70 scientific assistants from the humanities and social sciences. Additionally two subprojects are based at the University of Siegen and the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. The project has existed since 1997 and will continue until 2008.

Origins of the research centre and pre-conditions

A possible element which may have paved the way for the formation of the *SFB* is one main former research area at the federal level (*Landesforschungsschwerpunkt*) which according to one interview participant was financed by the federal government in the late 1980s. This research co-operation focused on the question of national and collective identities, evidently a subject which is related to memory cultures. Mainly historians and sociologists took part in this particular focus of the research project. One initiator of this research co-operation was involved in the beginnings of the DFG research centre. Interdisciplinary activities had already existed prior to this research. This did not only introduce the topic thematically but also at a ‘social’ level, as was pointed out by our interview partner. Cross-disciplinary contacts had been established to which the proposal for the Collaborative Research Centre could be linked.

²⁶ The disciplinary background, i.e. the subjects, which the participating researchers have studied, cover approximately 18 disciplines: Art History, Archaeology, History, Philosophy, German, English, Roman and Slavic Philology, Islamic Studies, Comparative Philology, Social Studies, Sociology, Classical Philology, Education, Ethnology, Politics, Turkish Studies and Medicine.

3.1 Research teams – construction of the teams and disciplinary and interdisciplinary background

3.1.1 Construction of the teams

Prior experience in the research field and/or interdisciplinary work and previously existing networks are the main factors when setting up the research teams. With regard to post-doctoral researchers, both of the junior researchers we interviewed wrote their doctoral thesis supervised by professors who participated in the Research Centre ‘Memory Cultures’. One senior researcher who was interviewed had already participated in a research project on national and collective identities.

3.1.2 Disciplinary affinities and interdisciplinary experience

Out of the four persons interviewed²⁷, one came from the humanities (English philology); one from history (which the interview partner himself described as a discipline connected to the field of social studies);²⁸ and the other two were social scientists (political science). When asked how they would describe their own (inter)disciplinary position and socialisation, most of them highlighted their ‘hybrid’ disciplinary socialisation. One of the senior researchers, a professor of political studies studied sociology and history, but got his *Habilitation* in political studies. His teaching approach therefore was ‘between’ these disciplines: ‘That means that my courses are concerned with contemporary history, sociology and every now and then political science.’²⁹

At least two of the four researchers interviewed highlighted their use of different disciplinary influences as essential for their own work. All of the researchers we interviewed had some kind of interdisciplinary experience prior to joining the project. These experiences ranged from the work of the junior researchers in an interdisciplinary student group or the attendance of the *GGK (Gießener Graduiertenkolleg für Kulturwissenschaften - Centre for Graduates in the Kulturwissenschaften* which encompasses graduates both from the humanities and social sciences) to the former participation of the senior researchers in interdisciplinary research projects.

The speaker of the project referred to the pluralism of methods used.

All of the researchers interviewed have a common knowledge of theories of memory, including authors from both the social sciences (e.g. Maurice Halbwachs) and the humanities (e.g. Aleida and Jan Assmann, Pierre Nora).

The project description mentions the use of different methods and disciplinary approaches in the formulation of an ‘integrative concept of cultural studies’.

(www.uni-giessen.de/erinnerungskulturen/home/sfb-concept.php, 3 January 2006)

In contrast to the Cultural Studies Research Centre in Cologne, our interview partners in Gießen were more sceptical about the reform debate about cultural studies

²⁷ In the following we will use the ‘he’ to introduce both male as well as female researchers.

²⁸ Similarly this disciplinary positioning has been described for example in Wallerstein, Immanuel et al. (1996): *Open the Social Sciences. Report of the Gulbenkian Commission on the Restructuring of the Social Sciences*. Stanford University Press, Stanford, California.

²⁹ ‘D.h. meine Veranstaltungen sind zeithistorisch, soziologisch und dann ganz hin und wieder politologisch.’

(*Kulturwissenschaften*) in Germany. One of the senior researchers pointed out that the debate on the reform of the humanities has existed since the 1970s.

Only one of the researchers explicitly connected his own work with a kind of cultural studies concept. He talked of the 'German tradition' of *Kulturwissenschaften* based on texts from academics like Max Weber and Ernst Cassirer. He saw the possible integration of the Anglo-Saxon cultural studies with this tradition as complicated: 'I believe that it is difficult to travel between the German *Kulturwissenschaften* and the English Cultural Studies, because of the very specific approach adopted by the Birmingham School. If I go to conferences and I translate my research as 'Cultural Studies', they think I am concerned with media and the working class.'³⁰

3.2 Theoretical positioning and concept

The concept of the Research Centre has to be seen in the context of a very lively debate about memory, which has been a topic in several disciplines of both the social sciences and humanities. It has been debated in the last decade (at least in Germany) more in the humanities, including history and has been less pronounced in the social sciences. The German debate on memory is contextualised in its specific national history, where the question of memory has been an essential topic due to the experience of Nazism. In the budget proposal for the period 2005-2008 the authors refer to the debate of the 1980s, which gave the impulse to start the research project in the 1990s. The memory debate has to consider both the national (here too, competing memory cultures have to be analysed) and the trans-national level. The proposal of the research centre highlights the growth in trans-national forms of commemoration. (Proposal, 32)

The collaborative research centre defines its research focus on its homepage as follows:

The *SFB Memory Cultures* combines the methodology of social and historical sciences, with the approach of the humanities, thus including both a practical and a form-oriented perspective. In doing so, interests, hegemonies and competitions of memory as well as its mediality and symbolic mediation are in focus. This interdisciplinary approach makes it possible to investigate frame structures of historical memory, the development of specific memory cultures as well as different forms of memory. Thanks to the interaction of empiricist methods and openness for theory, reflection of the practical and attention to the media, and furthermore historical deepness and the sensitivity for topicality memory becomes an integrative concept of cultural studies. (www.uni-giessen.de/erinnerungskulturen/home/sfb-concept.php, 3 January 2006)

Different aspects are being underlined by the research centre:

- the idea of difference between simultaneously existing specific memory cultures, due to something later termed the 'variedness of cultures'

³⁰ 'Ich glaube, dass das im Detail ganz schwierig, zwischen deutschen KW und englischen Cultural Studies hin und her zu gehen. Weil die so eine ganz bestimmte Ausrichtung haben, die Birmingham School. Ich glaube, was die wollen, ist noch mal ein ganz anderer Ansatz. Wenn ich auf Tagungen mit Engländern und Amerikanern hinkomme und das einfach übersetze in Cultural Studies, dann glauben die, ich mach was mit Medien und working class.'

- the combination of the methodology of the ‘historical and social sciences’ and the humanities (see the introduction above) and
- the contextualisation of their concept in cultural studies which ‘integrates social studies and humanities’.

The formulation of the concept of the research centre points to some disciplinary differences, connected to methods or at least thematical perspectives. Here interestingly a line is drawn between the social sciences and the historical sciences with a more ‘practical’ approach, and the humanities with a more ‘form-oriented perspective’. To some extent this division also came up in the experiences of those interviewed (see section 5.2). The website refers to different methods or perspectives, which might also be disciplinary as ‘empiricist methods’, ‘theory’, ‘historical deepness’ and ‘reflection of the practical’. But these are not explicitly connected to different disciplinary fields.

The proposal for the fourth funding phase in 2005 names four main assumptions on which the memory research of the *SFB* is based:

- ‘plurality of cultural memory’ (*Pluralität kultureller Erinnerung*) - therefore in the title already the plural ‘memory cultures’ is chosen
- ‘their principal openness and transformability’ (*deren prinzipielle Offenheit und Wandlungsfähigkeit*)
- ‘the necessity to put the categories of memory and memory cultures into a historical perspective’ (*die Notwendigkeit einer konsequenten Historisierung der Kategorien Erinnerung und Erinnerungskulturen*)
- ‘the multimediality of memory’ (*die Multimedialität des Erinnerungsgeschehens*) (Proposal, 33)

How have the basic theoretical concepts of the research centre developed? Similar to the other research project we examined, the principal concepts of the project are mainly formulated in the phases when the proposal is submitted for a renewal of the funding. This is mainly worked out by the junior researchers. Each sub-project that wants to participate in the project has to contribute their own project description to the proposal, but they have to agree somehow on a thematic link with the other projects in a given sub-project field. (A-F, s. next section)

3.3 Organisation

3.3.1 Basic structure

The basic structure of the Collaborative Research Centre consists of two main forms of organisations:

The content-forming interactions of the *SFB* Memory Cultures are based on two general pillars: on the one hand there is a variety of sub-projects, structured chronologically and systematically, and on the other hand the *SFB* consists of five interdisciplinary working groups.

(www.uni-giessen.de/erinnerungskulturen/home/sfb-structure.php 29 June 2005)

The chronologically organised *sub-projects* are the following:

A: Memory and Cultural Integration at the Time of the Roman Empire

B: Group-specific Memory Cultures in the Late Middle and Early Modern Ages

- C: Things and Their Power of Memory. On the Dialectics of Oblivion and Memory, Destruction and Preservation
- D: Forms and Processes of Memory in Political Cultures
- E: Memory Cultures in Times of Change: The Experience of Time and the Evolution of the Media
- F: Memory Cultures in Non-European Traditions of Thought and Trans-national Perspectives.

A specificity of this Research Centre is its (more or less) chronologically organised sub-projects. It differs for example from our case study in Cologne, where a more 'systematic' form of logic was used. In the case of Gießen this 'logic' may be related to the rather strong role of history in the research project and to the subject of 'memory'.

The interdisciplinary working groups are organized comprehensively. Together with the sub-projects they form the second pillar of the Collaborative Research Centre. They meet four to five times during the semester. The interdisciplinary working groups are organised on the following subjects:

- Order of Knowledge
- Theories of Memory
- Time, Media, Identity
- Intermediality
- Performativity

(not existing anymore: The Banning of Images and Criticism of Representation)

3.3.2 Communication and interdisciplinary work

The chronologically organised projects in the sub-projects of the Research Centre work mainly on a disciplinary basis. The interdisciplinary work therefore takes place in the regular interdisciplinary working groups and colloquia at the beginning and the end of each semester. Another occasion which stirs interdisciplinarity is the proposal phase, where the whole project has to agree on a common theoretical focus, formulated in the synopsis of the proposal (*Manteltext*). The wide range of publications is another occasion where interdisciplinary communication and discussion take place.

More detailed information, including how the communication process works within this structure was obtained in our interviews. Asked if he could analyse any changes in the interdisciplinary communication, one senior researcher summarised: 'I do not think that there have been radical changes, it is more open, it is nicer, it has certainly grown more stable, this communication, but it never has been a big problem [...]'.³¹

Interdisciplinary working groups

The idea behind the interdisciplinary working groups is, as the proposal for the fourth phase of the Research Centre states, to sustain 'a relationship between more historical-contextualising perspective and a more systematic-content oriented

³¹ 'Ich glaube nicht, dass man sagen kann, dass es eine radikale Änderung ist, es ist offener, es ist netter, es ist sicherlich auch stabiler geworden diese Kommunikation, aber sie war wirklich nie ein Problem, dass man sich erst beräuchern musste.'

perspective' (Proposal, 31). These two perspectives are associated with the two organisational forms – sub-projects and working groups. The proposal points to publications and conferences as productive results of the working groups. Every member of the Collaborative Centre has to be a member and has to participate in at least one interdisciplinary working group.

The contents and process in the working groups seem to be formed and changed by a more or less 'informal' or 'non-structured' communication process. One interview partner, who organises one of the working groups said that a new thematic working group simply 'emerges' (like for example the group 'Performativity'). Naturally, these working groups are organised by one or two people. They are mainly responsible for organisational tasks, but occasionally have to give some input. The head of one of the working groups described this as a process, where the discussion process can take on a life of its own.

Different activities are part of the work in these interdisciplinary groups: the presentation of the work of the sub-projects, **the common reading of different theoretical** text and, for example, in the case of the work group 'Time, Media, Identity' historical films were analysed. This is an example of the 'spontaneous' process of themes, which emerge in the groups, also between the different disciplines. Given the recent phenomenon of historical films on German history, the group decided to concentrate on the subject of the recent reception of these films.

Colloquia

Since October 2003 another institutionalised form of interdisciplinary structure has been introduced, namely one colloquium at the beginning and at the end of each semester. While the colloquia at the end of the semester are predominately meant for organisational questions, the kick-off meetings at the beginning are dedicated to the interdisciplinary debate. In these colloquia, disciplinary fields take turns to present their disciplinary perspective on the shared subject of 'memory'. One of our interview partners explained the emergence of this organisational form from a common and strong feeling of interdisciplinarity: 'Actually, we have stepped back, because we were too intertwined with interdisciplinarity as a concept. Oh, well, we sometimes were not even sure what exactly the philological concept of memory is.'³²

The 2005 proposal explains the colloquia as follows: 'The kick-off meeting of each semester is a result of the understanding that interdisciplinary co-operation has to be based on disciplinary self-reflection, that is reflection and foundation of disciplinary concepts of memory.'³³ (Proposal (*Finanzierungsantrag*) 2005: 67)

After having reflected on their own disciplinary presuppositions, the Research Centre plans to turn it the other way around by presenting what each disciplinary field has learned and adapted from the other disciplinary influences. Interestingly these methods to organise and reflect on interdisciplinarity resemble methods used in the

³² 'Wir haben eigentlich eine Rückbewegung gemacht, weil wir eben so interdisziplinär sind, na, ja, dass uns manchmal gar nicht klar war, was ist eigentlich konkret ein literaturwissenschaftliches Gedächtniskonzept, beispielsweise'.

³³ 'Die Semesterauftaktveranstaltung [...] folgte der Einsicht, dass gerade die interdisziplinäre Zusammenarbeit einer disziplinspezifischen Selbstreflexion, also einer Reflexion und Fundierung der disziplinären Gedächtniskonzepte bedarf.'

other Research Centre in Cologne. Central here is the idea of reflecting upon the interdisciplinary interaction, its own disciplinary position and its specific concepts.

Proposal for the prolongation of funding

The phases where the project asks for a renewal of funding for another 3 – 4 years may also be considered as a phase where the different disciplines have to cooperate and discuss to come to an agreement on their theoretical basis (see above). The whole process of the proposal is organised from a ‘governing body’ (*Leitungsgremium*) which consists of the speaker and three other professors. For the prolongation of the Research Centre for another three years, the project must evaluate itself internally. Secondly, one element in the proposal process is to write the synopsis (*Manteltext*), which articulates the theoretical and conceptual umbrella of the project. Here it is essential, that the different participating disciplines find a common focus. This requires intensive communication and discussion. Thus successful teamwork is essential. In the case of the proposal for the last phase of the project from 2006 to 2008 post-doctoral research fellows from five disciplines formed a so-called *Kompetenzteam*; Romance and English philology, sociology, politics and history. The junior researcher who described this as an interdisciplinary process of team work mentioned disciplinary aspects too. He said that the disciplinary perspectives also had to be taken into consideration. He related this to a ‘peer review perspective’. We can therefore assume that the formulation of a proposal is a compromise between different disciplinary perspectives and an interdisciplinary consensus, respective of the result of an interdisciplinary discourse, where the disciplinary reflexivity is provoked.

Public lecture series, conferences and publications

Forms of dissemination, which are directed towards a public, are lectures, conferences and publications. For the lectures (*Ringvorlesungen*) external researchers are invited to speak about their specific research related to the topic of memory. Well-known researchers in the field of memory, for example Harald Welzer or Jan Assman were invited. Sometimes this lectureship is combined with a workshop on the research project, held by the visiting lecturer the following day. Conferences are also held, where both researchers from the research centre and external researchers take part. These conferences are often documented in publications.

Publications reflect interdisciplinary working and result in some cases in core literature on the central topic of the Research Centre (e.g. in the series of publications *Formen der Erinnerung*, the vast publication *Erinnerung, Gedächtnis, Wissen, Studien zur kulturwissenschaftlichen Gedächtnisforschung*, ed. by Günther Oesterle (2005)). As one interview partner stated, this is another way to stimulate interdisciplinary communication.

3.4 Consequences for the participating (junior) researchers, i.e. their disciplinary careers

The DFG-leaflet for the proposal of a Collaborative Research Centre (*Merkblatt zur Förderung von Sonderforschungsbereichen*) states that ‘specific attention has to be paid to the promotion of young scientists [...]’ (Leaflet for the proposal of a Collaborative Research Centre, DFG-Vordrucke 60.04e-1/05. 27 January 2006 www.dfg.de/forschungsfoerderung/formulare/download/60_00e.pdf). The speaker of the centre also underlined this in the interview.

A lot of (predominantly postdoctoral) junior researchers are involved in the centre and as we can note in both case studies, they participate very actively in the communication process and research. Therefore we asked our interview partners how they see their work in such an interdisciplinary project being connected to their future academic career. Of course we cannot generalize from their answers, but they indicated tendencies which might apply to other junior research careers.

The two junior researchers we interviewed viewed their disciplinary career in strikingly different ways. The political scientist assessed his work in the interdisciplinary context of the *SFB* as not very useful for his disciplinary career. If he wanted to gain ‘disciplinary capital’ out of his work in the context of the Research Centre dominated by the humanities it would mean a lot of extra work. In contrast, the researcher who comes from a literature background never even considered his interdisciplinary work as a possible hindrance for his disciplinary career. These differing assessments can be explained in different ways. One reason could be that the post-doc coming from literature did not strive for a professorship in a traditional area of literature studies. That said the political scientist also did not pursue a ‘classical’ research area of the political sciences. Another reason for the difference in the assessment of the consequences of interdisciplinary working on their disciplinary future might be associated with an implicit hierarchy of the disciplines. This hierarchy was especially underlined by the literature researcher who articulated this ‘outsider view’ on the social sciences. According to his experiences it seemed that it is not very prestigious for the social sciences to work together with the humanities. An important factor in these descriptions is of course subjective and individual experience. These statements represent only very particular viewpoints.

3.5 Consequences for the university context – long-term investment in interdisciplinarity?

Related to the Research Centre of Memory Cultures, different long-term effects can be noticed. The impact of interdisciplinary research on teaching was mentioned both in the interviews and the proposal. (Proposal: 78)

Another effect, which should not be underestimated, was the ‘networking’ which was stimulated by the local research centre. The interviewees also mentioned the rise of communication and contact between the disciplines. This improvement of the communication and interdisciplinary contact evidently favoured other interdisciplinary initiatives. Accordingly three ‘side lines as one interview participant called them emerged: the graduate school *Transnationale Medienereignisse* (Transnational Media Events from Early Modern Times to the Present, www.uni-giessen.de/gkmedienerenisse/home/gk-researchprogram.php), the *Gießener Graduiertenzentrum für Kulturwissenschaften* (Graduate Centre *Kulturwissenschaften* founded in 2001) and the research centre *Zentrum für Medien und Interaktivität* (Centre for Media and Interactivity). All of them are initiatives, involving mainly researchers from the Collaborative Research Centre of Memory Cultures.

3.6 Summary

The interdisciplinary research project has evolved out of earlier interdisciplinary initiatives. Further investigation into the topic can be based on these experiences, as the proposal initiative can profit from already existing thematic research co-operations and interdisciplinary networks. While the former research project on national and collective identities was primarily situated in the social and historical sciences, on a much larger scale the actual research centre now involves the humanities, too. History as a discipline seems to have a specific and relatively dominant role in the context of the project. Its influence is reflected in the chronological and thus historical organisation of the sub-projects. While this chronological structure is primarily organised in a disciplinary way, interdisciplinary communication is organised in a systematic way into interdisciplinary working groups working on different topics. Additionally as a new form of interdisciplinary communication colloquia have been established at the beginning and end of each semester. Here the disciplines as a first step reflect on their own disciplinary concepts concerning research on memory. Following this they plan to examine the influences the disciplines have received from the other disciplines concerning memory. This is important for the junior researchers regarding their own positioning between the formative influence of the disciplines and their own interdisciplinary experience and research.

4 Interdisciplinary practice in the *FK/SFB* Cologne

The *Kulturwissenschaftliches Forschungskolleg Medien und kulturelle Kommunikation* is a specific form of a Collaborative Research Centre, namely a 'Cultural Studies Research Centre'³⁴. 'The research project deals with issues of the media within the context of their respective cultural dimensions.'³⁵

(www.uni-koeln.de/inter-fak/fk-427/prog/prog_fk_intro.html, 21 January 2005)

14 sub-projects are organised under three main thematic areas of research:

- medial differences and the construction and effects of evidence (A)
- cultures of communication and visibility (B)
- discourses of media in relation to the positioning and agency of the observer (C) (www.uni-koeln.de/inter-fak/fk-427/prog/prog_fk_intro.html, 21 January 2005)³⁶.

In these projects several disciplines are represented ranging from psychology and experimental psycholinguistics to medieval studies, musicology, ethnology (African studies), general linguistics and literature.³⁷ Approximately 70 senior and junior researchers participate in the project. The Cultural Studies Research Centre was founded in 1999 and is now in its third phase of funding, which started in 2005 and will finish in 2008.

Origins of the research centre

One of the initiators of the DFG-project in Cologne traces the formation of the research centre back to academic and political science debates. In the 1990s, scholars discussed the possibility of introducing the topic of media in German language and literature studies. The idea was to link together various research areas of this discipline. Since the mid-1990s academics in the Western Part of Germany have tried to promote the foundation of Humanities Research Centres³⁸ (*Geisteswissenschaftliche Zentren*) similar to the *Geisteswissenschaftliche Zentren* already existing in the Eastern part of Germany, financed by the DFG. In this political and scientific context a collaboration of different universities held talks with the federal government of North-Rhine/Westphalia to promote media studies within the humanities. This initiative group was entitled 'Language, Literature and Culture in a changing media context' (*'Sprache, Literatur, Kultur im Wandel ihrer medialen*

³⁴ 'Cultural Studies' is the translated title used by the DFG. One has to bear in mind that this programme has to be seen in the context of the German debate on 'Kulturwissenschaften', which can not be entirely equated with the Anglo-Saxon Cultural Studies. (see section 2)

³⁵ 'Das Forschungskolleg stellt sich die Aufgabe, Fragen der Medienevolution mit einer kulturwissenschaftlichen Akzentsetzung zu bearbeiten.'

³⁶ 'Mediale Differenzen und ihre Evidenzverfahren und -effekte (Projektbereich A)
-Kommunikationskulturen als Politiken der Sichtbarkeit (Projektbereich B)
-Mediendiskurse in ihrem Verhältnis zu Beobachter-Instituierung und Handlungsmacht (Projektbereich C)'

³⁷ The disciplinary background of the researchers of this project covers more than 20 disciplines (note that in the German education system it is possible to study more than one subject on a degree level). These include: psychology, ethnology, art history, linguistics, neuron-linguistics, political science, pedagogical studies, theatre, film and television studies, IT studies, American-studies, theology, economics, philosophy, history and various forms of philology.

³⁸ Title translated by the DFG.

Bedingungen'). This group was sustained from 1995 until 1998 by the federal government (www.uni-koeln.de/inter-fak/fk-427/inst/gesch.html, 22 December 2005) and prepared the foundation of the Cultural Studies Research Centre. These early debates and initiatives were intrinsic in forming the nucleus of the research centre in Cologne in co-operation with the universities of Aachen, Bochum and Bonn.

4.1. Research teams – construction of the teams and disciplinary and interdisciplinary background

4.1.1 Construction of the teams

The formal process of team construction is primarily affected by the A-, B-, C-structure of the project, into which applicants and their research projects must fit. The decision to appoint new researchers is made by the *Kollegversammlung* for each new research period (of three or four years). Two of the senior researchers interviewed highlighted the important role of the junior researchers. As most of the participating researchers have already completed a PhD, they can be regarded as 'senior researchers', who are pursuing their own research projects, rather than seeking qualifications. Naturally, their research issues are associated with projects of the respective professors who are working as project managers leading the individual sub-projects. Those interviewed also highlighted the importance of the younger researchers in the 'proposal phase' and their ability to influence the discussions in controversial situations. One senior researcher stated that the junior researchers 'make the Centre', as they are very much involved in the development-phases of the project-content and have the right to veto important discussions. Established networks on both thematic and former co-operation levels are essential for the construction of the teams. For example, the postdoctoral researcher we interviewed was working on a topic which corresponded to the sub-project of his former senior researcher, who had moved to the University of Cologne and asked the postdoctoral researcher to join him.

4.1.2 Disciplinary affinities and interdisciplinary experiences

The participants' areas of expertise are primarily in the humanities subjects, but also include specialists from the natural and technical sciences, as IT scientists and neuro-linguists have also participated. (Additionally ethnology and psychology could be classified as a 'hybrid' disciplines related to social sciences.)

All the researchers who were interviewed³⁹ come from the humanities (although some have studied a discipline in the social sciences) and describe their disciplinary affinity as being grounded in what is known as *kulturwissenschaftliche Medienwissenschaft*. We interviewed three professors from philosophy, linguistics and theatre-, film- and television-studies and one post-doctoral researcher from theatre-, film- and television-studies. This has to be seen in the context of their position with respect to communications studies that are traditionally part of the social sciences. One senior researcher explained the difference as follows:

³⁹ Their disciplinary backgrounds cover: German Studies, Theology, Theatre Studies (Theaterwissenschaft), Political Science, History, Philosophy, Sociology, Theatre, Film and Television Studies (*Theater-, Film- und Fernsehwissenschaft*). In the following we will use the 'he' to introduce both male as well as female researchers.

Media and communication studies when looked at within the social studies show distinct divisions between research on recipients, on effects of media and on the role of the speaker/communicator. The work we do starts with the basics and asks where this strict division comes from. The next question is to ask if it is possible to keep this strict division. If we look at the actor network theory, then we have to question this rigid dichotomy in depth. And then we come to new interesting combinations, regarding the basic categories of the theory of media studies which we study.⁴⁰

Similarly another researcher pointed to the importance of reflecting on the term 'media' as characteristic of a 'kulturwissenschaftliche Medienwissenschaft'. This leads to a more open and different conception of the term 'media'. Accordingly, the work on terminology and reflection on categories and discourses are highlighted as particularly important by the researchers.

All four interview partners name as main 'frames' of reference discourse analysis, post structuralism and systems theory, both for the project and also to some extent for their own research focus. To describe their approach the interview partners referred less to a strong disciplinary tradition (except perhaps one of the researchers, whom we interviewed, whose approach was based above all on linguistics, i.e. semiotic theory) but more to a general *kulturwissenschaftliche* position.

Coming from this position there exist demarcations from the social scientific media studies. At the same time one interview partner refers to a common field, which embraces humanities, social sciences as well as natural and technical sciences: 'In all these disciplinary fields exist (Geisteswissenschaften, Kulturwissenschaften, Social Sciences) convergence zones of a new 'kulturwissenschaftliches' thinking, where disciplines not only from the social sciences, humanities and Kulturwissenschaften can be a part of.'⁴¹ (see further section 5)

All the people interviewed already had interdisciplinary experience. Additionally, those in leadership positions had held similar positions in either an interdisciplinary graduate school or interdisciplinary research projects before collaborating on the current project. When applying for representative and organisational positions in the project, it was important for the candidates to have had prior experience in interdisciplinary project work – both on a pragmatic and thematic level. Interdisciplinary experience is an important factor concerning the appointment of researchers for the teams. The managing director had been involved in long-term activities concerning research policies to strengthen the humanities and to unify the philological discipline within the realm of media research. In doing so, he promoted a field of research which had been primarily addressed by the social sciences and less by the humanities. Both the managing director and the deputy director are involved in a relatively new field of research in their respective disciplinary fields.

⁴⁰ 'Wenn ich mal die sozialwissenschaftliche Medien- oder Kommunikationswissenschaft nehme, die teilt sehr stark ein, zwischen einer Rezipienten-, einer Wirkungsforschung und einer Kommunikatorforschung. Wohingegen wir viel basaler ansetzen und sagen, woher kommt überhaupt diese strikte Aufteilung? [...] Und der nächste Schritt ist, inwieweit ist diese strikte Aufteilung überhaupt noch haltbar? Wenn wir mal auf einer Actor-Network Theory schauen, dann müssen wir auch diese rigide Dichotomie ganz streng befragen. Und kommen von daher auf sehr interessante neue Konstellationen, was so die Basiskategorien der Theorie der Massenmedien betrifft, die wir befragen.'

⁴¹ 'Es gibt nach meiner Überzeugung in allen diesen disziplinären Feldern Konvergenzzonen eines neuen kulturwissenschaftlichen Denkens und dazu gehören auch klassischerweise nichtsozial-, geistes- und kulturwissenschaftliche Disziplinen.'

All three interview partners, who joined the project later on, had been working in the field of *kulturwissenschaftliche* media studies.

4.2 Theoretical positioning and concept

The so-called *Kulturwissenschaftliches Forschungskolleg* in Cologne embraces the humanities and the natural and technical sciences. The concept of this specific variation of a *SFB* is to open up the humanities not only to the social sciences, but above all to the natural and technical sciences. This concept has to be seen in the context of the debates on the *Kulturwissenschaften* in Germany since the 1990s.⁴²

In a public speech held in January 2005 for the establishment of a new degree programme entitled *Cultural Studies* at the University of Koblenz, Ludwig Jäger, a member of the Research Centre of Cologne, Aachen and Bonn, explained its concept with regard to this debate. He articulated the five goals of the Cultural Studies Research Centre ‘Media and Cultural Communication’:

‘(1) Opening up interdisciplinary possibilities, (2) the transdisciplinary construction of the research subject, (3) the integration of methodical paradigms which until now have been separated, (4) the internationalisation of research and (5) the promotion of junior researchers.’⁴³ (Jäger 2005: 2-3)

With regard to interdisciplinary possibilities, he pointed to different levels which are addressed in the research context of the centre: interdisciplinary possibilities with the natural and technical sciences, and transgressing a perspective focused primarily on Europe. Additionally the centre concentrates not just on recent processes in the media, but also addresses the historical development of the media.

Related to the transdisciplinary construction of the research subject he referred to the main terms ‘culture’, ‘communication’ and ‘media’ (*Kultur*, *Kommunikation* und *Medien*) which encompass a *kulturwissenschaftliche* theory of media. Such a theory is intended ‘not to be based on an essentialist definition of media and culture’.⁴⁴ (Jäger 2005: 2) Instead such a theory, which uses terms such as ‘transcription’, ‘addressing’, ‘interference’, [...] ‘procedures of evidence’, ‘agency’ etc. is ‘meant to produce’ a ‘thick description’ of inter-media relations which can show the operational logic of the media regarding cultural semantic.⁴⁵ (Jäger 2005: 2-3)

As a third important programmatic issue for the Research Centre Jäger mentioned the integration of ‘methodical paradigms’ which until now have been separate. According to him, this can be obtained by ‘de-dramatising’ (*Entdramatisierung*) (Jäger 2005: 3) the dichotomy of CP Snow’s two cultures.⁴⁶ Correspondingly, Jäger described the working of the Research Centre as ‘characterised by methodological openness, which consists of co-existing historic-hermeneutical, discourse-analytical, empirical

⁴² Cf. Krebs, Rebecca, Siouti, Irini Apitzsch Ursula, Ursula and Silke Wenk (2005) *Disciplinary Barriers between the Social Sciences and Humanities. National Report on Germany.* January: Chapter 6, 49-46 <<http://www.hull.ac.uk/researchintegration/reports.htm>>

⁴³ ‘(1) Disziplinäre Öffnung zur Interdisziplinarität, (2) Transdisziplinäre Gegenstandskonstitution (3) Integration bislang getrennter methodischer Paradigma (4) Internationalisierung der Forschung sowie (5) Nachwuchsförderung.’

⁴⁴ ‘die sich nicht auf essentialistische Definitions- und Bestimmungsversuche stützt, was Medien und Kultur eigentlich sind’

⁴⁵ ‘Begriffe wie ‘Transkription’, ‘Adressierung’, ‘Störung’, [...] ‘Evidenzverfahren’, ‘Agency’ etc. erlauben es, in ‘dichten Beschreibungen’ intermedialer Verhältnisse die operative Logik von Medien in ihrer Bedeutung für die kulturelle Semantik freizulegen.’

⁴⁶ Cf. Charles Percy Snow (1964) *The Two Cultures and a Second Look. An Expanded Version of the Two Cultures and the Scientific Revolution.* Cambridge.

experimental, neuro-scientific as well as aesthetic methods of knowledge acquisition.⁴⁷ (ibid.)

The Social Sciences do not participate (except perhaps for the ‘hybrid’ subjects of ethnology and psychology) in Cologne. Interestingly there exists a Centre for Media Studies in the faculty of economy and social sciences too.

(www.wiso.uni-koeln.de/medien/forschungsprojekte.htm)

This may be due to the fact that there is a difference in the approach of the different fields of media studies (see also the section ‘Disciplinary affinities’ and the position explained by Jäger in his speech quoted above). The Cultural Studies Research Centre seems to concentrate on the media in relation to their historical and material context and pursues a reflection on the terminology and theory of the media. The Centre for Media Studies however seems to focus mostly on traditional empirical research of media reception, without concern for the different forms of media and their history. The methodological and theoretical positions, which the interviewed declare, differ from the form of media studies which had been established in the past decades as a social science.

Methodology

Given the fact that the research is based in the humanities as well as the natural and technical sciences it is clear that, in the words of the managing director, a ‘hermeneutical and empirical approach’ must be adopted. In a manner akin to one colleague, he described the function of different methodologies as ‘methodological liberalism’. On this topic, one researcher pointed out a co-operation with an empirical sociologist, whose data on the reception of media is analysed by the project ‘Discourse history of the reception of the media’ (*Diskursgeschichte der Wirkungsgeschichte der Medien*). He pointed to the methodological differences which complement one another.

4.3 Organisation

4.3.1 Basic structure

The research project is organised into three main fields which have remained stable since its founding in 1999. These are ‘Medial differences and the construction and effects of evidence’ (A), ‘Cultures of communication and visibility’ (B) and ‘Discourses of media in relation to the positioning and agency of the observer’ (C). This organisational structure can be regarded as a systematic one which differs from our other case study (section 3), where the primary structure is chronologically organised. The research is organised into several sub-projects within these sectors, primarily organised along disciplinary lines. But the projects also have an interdisciplinary dimension: for example, one of our interview partners participated in a sub-project with an art historian, a philologist and two media studies researchers. During the reorganisation of each new three-year phase of the project (each of which is preceded by a proposal phase), new projects can be introduced provided they fit into the A, B, C, structure detailed above.

⁴⁷ ‘[...] geprägt durch eine methodologische Offenheit, die historisch-hermeneutische, diskursanalytische, empirisch experimentelle, neurowissenschaftlich-bildgebende und auch ästhetische Verfahren der Erkenntnisgewinnung nebeneinander stehen lässt [...].’

According to one senior researcher, the way in which the projects evolve is primarily influenced not by disciplinary view, but by problem-centred perspectives. Two of the senior researchers in leading positions underlined the important role of the postdoctoral researchers, who provide a lot of ideas for the concepts of their projects.

4.3.2 Communication and interdisciplinary work

‘The sustainability and promotion of methodological reflection and the progressive development of methods is explicitly desired, especially the chance to link together perspectives which until now have been separated.’⁴⁸ (Jäger 2005: 1) The author defines this as a specific requirement of the DFG with regard to the programme specificity in the Cultural Studies Research Centre (*Kulturwissenschaftliches Forschungskolleg*). The activities of the Research Centre can be seen in this context. All interview partners shared the opinion that the essential task of the project has to be the establishment of communication between the different disciplines and sub-projects. What an interdisciplinary communication process delivers was viewed slightly differently by our various interview participants. One principle and modest effect of the interdisciplinary encounter in workshops, regular meetings and conferences could be an exchange of positions, views, theories and therefore a higher level of interdisciplinary awareness and disciplinary reflexivity. Relating his actual interdisciplinary experience in Cologne to his former (more problematic) interdisciplinary experiences, the junior researcher (who had worked in the project for five months when interviewed – i.e. since the start of the funding phase in spring 2005) stated that his experience of interdisciplinary work had remained principally the same: namely ‘the insight that interdisciplinary work is primarily limited to an exchange between people, who pursue different kinds of research. This should not be understood as something where disciplinary boundaries are transgressed or become irrelevant.’⁴⁹ He continued: ‘Actually I believe, on a very basic level, it is all about taking note of what other disciplines do and to realise that other disciplines come to different conclusions due to a different set of methods.’⁵⁰ One senior researcher underlined the need to relate the various sub-projects and individual researchers through an organized communication process.

One might aim ‘to find a common language’, said one senior researcher, who had been working in another DFG Collaborative Research Centre before. He added: ‘We have accomplished quite a lot since the beginning of our funding period. I remember quite well that from my time in X [his former interdisciplinary working place] that the main problem was to find a common language, a fundamental problem of all interdisciplinary research.’⁵¹ Another senior researcher described the goal of the

⁴⁸ ‘Die Förderung methodologischer Reflexion und die Weiterentwicklung von Methoden werden ausdrücklich erwartet, wobei insbesondere die Möglichkeiten der Integration bislang getrennter Betrachtungsweisen erkundet werden sollen.’

⁴⁹ ‘[...] eine Einsicht, dass Interdisziplinarität für mich wirklich beschränkt ist zunächst mal auf so etwas wie einen Austausch von Leuten, die unterschiedliche Forschung machen, aber lässt sich nicht verstehen als etwas, wo dann Disziplinengrenzen überschritten oder irrelevant oder sonst etwas werden.’

⁵⁰ ‘Also, ich glaube, am banalsten geht es darum, zur Kenntnis zu nehmen, was andere Disziplinen machen und zur Kenntnis zu nehmen, dass man mit den methodischen Instrumentarien in einer anderen Disziplin zu anderen Ergebnissen kommt, dass man andere Voraussetzungen hat.’

⁵¹ ‘Wir sind da schon relativ weit nach unserer Laufzeit jetzt, aber ich erinnere mich sehr gut, auch aus den Anfängen der Siegener Zeit, das es eines der Hauptprobleme, eines der basalen Probleme interdisziplinärer Forschung ist, eine gemeinsame Sprache zu finden.’

interdisciplinary communication process to establish a common basis of knowledge and terminology, which does not have to be explained further. He referred here to the analysis of the characteristics of change and the establishment of scientific paradigms by Thomas S. Kuhn⁵². Our interview participant described the process to find a common language in the project as a process of ‘normalising sciences’: ‘If one applies the model of Kuhn to our project one could say that for more than six years we have been busy making ourselves scientifically capable at a common level (‘normal science’⁵³).’⁵⁴ Additionally he spoke of a ‘common field’ which had to be established by the different participating disciplines.

The extent to which this denotes a common language or a common stance was perceived differently by all of those interviewed. All participants agreed that it is not possible and also not desirable to establish one position or ‘super-theory’. The main claim is a ‘methodological liberalism’. Yet, again, one researcher expressed doubts, in how far these common terms, which are discussed in the colloquia, are understood similarly by the different participants of the project.

Under the umbrella of these common theories and terminologies, the main boundary was experienced between the more ‘quantitative empirical’ and the more ‘theoretical’ academic positions. This boundary was described by one senior researcher as ‘inhibiting scholarly knowledge’ (*‘erkenntnishindernd’*). Another senior researcher pointed to the conflicts arising where the cultural sciences tend to reflect on the cultural context of scientific approaches. This is a view, which is sometimes felt as an intrusion from the perspective of the ‘natural sciences.’

The communication between the different sub-projects took place in different working formats: the colloquium of the whole research project, working groups, workshops (connected often to visiting professorship), conferences and symposia.

The function of these different forms of communication was viewed slightly differently by the various persons interviewed. One may distinguish between three different forms of organised interaction:

- Small meetings, such as workshops and working groups which are primarily initiated and organised by one sub-project and which sometimes integrate a few other sub-projects or researchers from other sub-projects. These can be both completely internal or to some extent ‘external’, as workshops sometimes are organised in connection with a visiting professorship.
- The large internal meeting, the colloquium, where the whole project meets.
- ‘External’, public meetings of the project, like conferences, where the project ‘acts’ and defines itself towards an (academic) public context.

⁵² Thomas S Kuhn (1963) *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

⁵³ Cf. Kuhn 1963: 10 ff. Kuhn writes concerning this topic: ‘Men whose research is based on shared paradigms are committed to the same rules and standards of scientific practice. That commitment and the apparent consensus it produces are prerequisites for normal science, i.e. for the genesis and continuation of a particular research tradition.’ Kuhn 2006: 11. (Yet, one has to ask, if the model of Kuhn is applicable to the humanities and social sciences).

⁵⁴ ‘Wenn man das Kuhnsche Modell appliziert auf uns – wir sind eigentlich seit gut sechs Jahren dabei uns ‘normalwissenschaftlich’ fähig zu machen.’

Working-groups

Working groups are initiated in an informal way, i.e. if a sub-project is interested in an issue which needs to be discussed and read about as a group, it can be initiated. As one interview participant clarified further, it is possible for a researcher from another sub-project to join in this discussion.

Workshops

Workshops can be seen as a possibility within the project to intensify the work of a sub project on a particular topic. One senior researcher highlighted the need to support such intensive work financially, as it is vital for an effective communication process in the project. The *SFB* has a special budget for such activities. The researcher saw this as an important factor for the ‘integration work’ in the project. The workshops take two days and comprise around 10 – 20 researchers. As with the colloquia, it is important to note that these meetings are internal, where problems and questions can be discussed more freely than in more representative public meetings: ‘This is [referring to the workshops] on the more important actual level, where work on integration takes place. There is less structure prepared in advance and less consideration given to the image of the project.’⁵⁵

The colloquium

The colloquium is the principal organisational setting where the whole project meets fortnightly. Either the sub-projects present their own work or, as was practised for example in the summer semester 2005, the members of the project read a text together which is then discussed in the colloquium. Similar to the other organisational formats, issues and topics are developed by the participants. ‘In an open process participating sub-projects can propose a text which they wish to discuss in the project’s context. The readings are often connected to certain core questions and concepts which have played a role in the project proposal, where one intends to communicate about new developments in these research fields.’⁵⁶ This can be seen as a possible way to ‘find a common language’ (*‘eine gemeinsame Sprache finden’*), as another researcher stated.

Proposal and review phase

Concerning the interdisciplinary communication process in its proposal phases, here different sub-projects have to reach a compromise. As one senior researcher stated: the need to make a project proposal stirs the reflexes of the own (disciplinary) position of the respective sub-projects and researchers whilst simultaneously requiring the openness and creativity to establish some kind of common idea and concept as a framework. The discussion of the proposal takes place in the meetings (*Kollegversammlungen*) of the *SFB*. In this process the junior researchers play a very important role, as they are part of the editorial group.

The conferences

Both researchers from the *FK/SFB* and external academics participate in the conferences of the *FK Medien und kulturelle Kommunikation*. In contrast to the internal meetings, here the aspect of dialogue between a broader academic discourse

⁵⁵ ‘Dann gibt es die Ebene Workshops. Das ist die entscheidendere eigentliche Ebene für die Integrationsarbeit hier im Kolleg. Weil es da auch wenig, ich sag jetzt mal, Vorstrukturierung und wenig Rücksicht auf Repräsentation. [...] gibt.’

⁵⁶ ‘Oft, zu einem Leitbegriff, zu einer bestimmten Konzeption, die im Antrag auch eine Rolle gespielt hat, wo man sich einfach verständigen will über neue Entwicklungen auf diesem Gebiet’.

and its context is critical. Conferences take place two or three times a year whereas the symposium, due to its scale, is organised two or three times in the four-year phase of the project. Generally one or two sub-projects are primarily responsible for the organisation of a conference and five or six other sub-projects participate. The initiative and idea evolves from the sub-projects and has to be seen like the other organisational forms as a rather ‘open process’:

The more concrete networking [in the *SFB*] happens when projects [...] say: ‘We would like to hold a conference on a particular subject.’ Nonetheless it is clear from the beginning that interested researchers from other sub-projects participate in the conceptualisation, organisation and the planning.⁵⁷

The conferences can be regarded as an instrument, which on a more abstract level generate common interdisciplinary issues and concepts. The managing director sees the preparation phase as a possibility to make interdisciplinary work into a common theme that can be presented in collaboration between different sub-projects. These conferences are documented through accompanying publications.

One senior researcher pointed to the difference between internal and external public meetings. At the conferences the researcher can receive new ideas and can develop more common general concepts. Discussion usually takes place in the ‘internal meetings’:

At the big meetings we are of course all present, but there are a lot of other interested [external] participants. This causes a different dynamic, which points towards the general and conceptual themes. Here inspiration is generated [...]. In these very big events you have to guarantee that not only you but the public is also satisfied. [...] Later, these conferences result in publications [...]. Thus one has to tackle this in a more strategic way than usual.⁵⁸

Informal exchange

One senior researcher thought essential the informal possibility to ‘drop in’ at another office of a fellow researcher for a fruitful dialogue. This indicates the productive aspect of a common space shared by the project. The project has its own common room and several offices. Informal exchange is very much sustained by this pragmatic factor:

And then there is this last level, which actually is already there. The colleagues in the house, we have known each other for years of course and it is always possible to make an appointment at short notice. One goes from office to office – thus a lot happens there of course [...]. This is absolutely vital. Collaborative Research Centres have the opportunity to not be concentrated in

⁵⁷ *‘Die konkretere vernetzte Arbeit findet dann eher einfach statt, indem Projekte[...] sagen: ‘Wir würden gerne mal eine Tagung zu diesem oder jenem Thema machen wenn dann aber von vornherein klar ist, dass die Tagung nicht allein von einem Projekt organisiert wird, sondern dass dann Leute aus anderen Projekten, die sich auch für dieses Projekt interessieren, dass die sich auch an der gesamten Konzeption, Organisation und Planung der Tagung beteiligen.’*

⁵⁸ *‘Bei den Großveranstaltungen sind wir natürlich auch alle da, präsent ist man, aber da sind dann auch noch viele andere Interessierte dabei und dann hat man immer so eine Dynamik, die dann doch mehr ins Allgemeinere geht, Konzeptionellere. Da kann man sich ’ne Menge Anregungen holen [...]. Bei den ganz großen Sachen müssen Sie auch irgendwie sehen, dass Sie nicht nur sich selbst zufrieden stellen, sondern auch eine interessierte Öffentlichkeit. [...] Es wird nachher ein Band daraus hervorgehen [...]. Also, das muss man einfach noch ein bisschen strategischer so angehen als andere Dinge.’*

only one spot. You are allowed to split up between different institutes and thus different buildings. In practice, this does not really work. In such a case it is eventually more a conglomeration of several single projects, which as a single project may achieve something and may work out very well. But what you do not have is the possibility for an informal exchange.⁵⁹

4.4 Consequences for the research context at university – long term investment in interdisciplinary work?

Long-term investments are evident in the teaching and foundation of a new degree in Cologne. The deputy director sees the specificity of Cologne manifested in the evolution of media sciences, which is contextualised in the *Kulturwissenschaften*: ‘This [the establishment of the Collaborative Research Centre] has had concrete ‘curricular’ consequences. We have been able to establish on this basis [on cultural studies grounded in the *Kulturwissenschaften*] an interdisciplinary degree of media studies.’⁶⁰ Media studies in Cologne consists of a series of focal points, namely media psychology, media management, economy and sociology of media, media IT, media cultural studies and media law (*Medienpsychologie, Medienmanagement, Ökonomie und Soziologie der Medien, Medieninformatik, Medienkulturwissenschaft, Medienrecht*, see “Aufbau” <www.zfmk.uni-koeln.de/de/stud/infos/aufbau.htm> 31 January 2006). Discussing the theme of interdisciplinary work within research versus teaching, the same researcher remarked: ‘if interdisciplinary work is evident in research, it has special merits from the research point of view. But another very important effect is that curricula become dynamic. This is clear when looking at the degree in Cologne.’⁶¹ The other senior researcher highlighted this aspect too and stated that the Research Centre does not want to be a separate research institute.

4.5 Summary

Similar to our case study in Gießen the project’s origins can be found in earlier interdisciplinary research initiatives and (in the case of Cologne) activities directed towards a change in research policy. Similar to Gießen a personal interdisciplinary background was common to the researchers participating in the project and was considered important. Additionally, like in our other case study, the role of the junior researchers was also regarded as significant.

The *FK/SFB Medien und kulturelle Kommunikation* in Cologne aim to establish common fields of knowledge and to integrate sub-projects into main subject areas.

⁵⁹ ‘Und dann gibt es noch die allerletzte Ebene, die ja sowieso da ist. Die Kollegen sind im Haus, man kennt sich natürlich inzwischen auch seit einigen Jahren und man verabredet sich kurz, geht von Zimmer zu Zimmer, also da läuft natürlich auch viel [...] Die ist absolut vital. Sonderforschungsbereiche haben ja zum Teil die Möglichkeit, es nicht räumlich konzentrieren zu müssen. Das kann man auch verteilen über die Institute hinweg. Das haut nicht richtig hin. Dann ist es doch letztendlich eine Ansammlung von Einzelprojekten, die eben als Einzelprojekt sicher ihren Verdienst haben und ganz toll funktionieren mögen. Was man eben nicht hat, ist diese Möglichkeit zum zwanglosen Austausch.’

⁶⁰ ‘Das hat auch ganz konkrete curriculare Auswirkungen gehabt. Wir haben auf dieser Basis dann einen Diplomstudiengang Medienwissenschaften an der Uni Köln etablieren können, der seinerzeit interdisziplinär ausgerichtet ist.’

⁶¹ ‘[...] die Interdisziplinarität wird zwar primär in Forschungszusammenhängen beobachtet und hat ihre Verdienste auch unter Forschungsgesichtspunkten. Aber ein ganz wichtiger Effekt ist, dass auch die Curricula in Bewegung geraten und eine Dynamik sich da abzeichnet. Und das können Sie dann an dieser Kölner Einführung des Studiengangs ablesen.’

Here the importance of creating a common academic language has to be mentioned. At the same time our interview partners considered tolerance towards disciplinary differences and a pluralism of methods as important.

Interdisciplinary communication takes place in different forms of organisation. Most important is to note which sort of communication these different institutionalised forms sustain. One finding is that especially in extensive collective research projects small forums of communication and the possibility for informal exchange (e.g. a common building) are necessary to guarantee an intensive exchange.

5 Personal views and motivations related to interdisciplinarity

Interdisciplinarity largely depends on the support and openness of the participating researchers. This was underlined by interview partners on both, the programme level and the project level. The individual attitude towards the specific interdisciplinary working context is related to one's personal (inter)disciplinary background and experiences. This attitude is also related to disciplinary cultures and their implicit images of themselves and the 'others' and the way they are articulated or/and dealt with.

In none of the projects did we find strong interdisciplinary conflicts. This may partly be due to the fact that the researchers could avoid conflicts by concentrating on the individual project or simply by avoiding direct contact with people they did not cooperate with (as the size of the project is quite big) etc. This was highlighted by many researchers. Further it could also be caused by the readiness of the individual project members to articulate and reflect the specific (self)understandings of disciplinary contents and their borders.

5.1 Individual motivation and interdisciplinarity

Two aspects which we consider crucial in an interdisciplinary process were of prime importance in the researchers' assessment and evaluation concerning interdisciplinarity in an either positive or slightly negative way. One aspect was how the researchers estimate the influence of interdisciplinarity on their own work. The second was the question, in how far they see the process to develop a common terminology as fruitful. Both aspects can be considered important factors to motivate or discourage researchers to participate actively in the interdisciplinary communication and research process.

5.1.2 Views on the value of interdisciplinary influences on one's individual research

All the researchers we interviewed were open to interdisciplinary influences as they used theories and texts coming from different disciplines. They had already worked in other interdisciplinary contexts or had an interdisciplinary academic background. To give an example one of our interviewees had studied sociology, politics and film studies. Most of the researchers considered the influence which the actual interdisciplinary project had on their work as constructive. Of the eight interviewees people one had a more sceptical view regarding this point. (Generally the more sceptical researchers in the research projects may also be considered as active and important interdisciplinary participants who actually stir and provoke serious exchange and discussion of ideas and positions.) All the senior researchers we interviewed were positive about the possibilities and impulses the interdisciplinary context gave to their own work. They were able to do different research than they would have done in a merely disciplinary field. They mentioned that their motivation to search for interdisciplinarity was 'to continue learning'. The researchers described it as both 'exciting' and a 'productive disturbance' (*produktive Störung*). They

estimated it as fruitful for their own work as well as enriching their own views (for example the co-operation between politics and art history in the context of visual studies (*Bildwissenschaft*)). It also inspired them to assimilate theories from other disciplines into their own work or to discover new problems to tackle.

The relationship between interdisciplinary work and disciplinary careers has to be considered precarious in the case of the junior researchers. However, only one of the three junior researchers interviewed regarded this as problematic. There may be various reasons for this. One junior researcher from the social sciences experienced the research context as primarily dominated by the humanities and thus quite far from his own field.

Three possible reasons could be found for problems regarding a disciplinary career which might arise due interdisciplinary working:

1 It can be generally problematic for one's own disciplinary career to work in an interdisciplinary context which is dominated by the 'other field'.

2 Some disciplinary backgrounds may be more opposed to interdisciplinary influences (especially if the interdisciplinary co-operation is dominated by another more distant field).

3 If so, this might be due to an implicit hierarchy of disciplines (which was mentioned by another interview partner from the humanities). The experience of hierarchies depends a lot on personal and individual experiences. One junior researcher (with a background in the humanities) had not even thought about problems likely to occur concerning interdisciplinary working. Yet, the researcher admitted that it could be a problem, if he tried to work in a more traditional disciplinary field. But as the junior researcher did not intend to pursue such a career he was quite optimistic about his future.

5.1.3 *Begriffsarbeit* – the work on a common language as interdisciplinary discourse

The second aspect which was evaluated differently by our interview partners was the question of establishing a common language (cf. section 3 and 4). All interview partners agreed that a process of working on theoretical concepts and language (*Begriffsarbeit*) is essential in an interdisciplinary process.⁶² By contrast, the outcome of this work was described differently. Concerning the outcomes of this work and the effect it had on an epistemological level two positions can be distinguished. The optimistic positions argue that the communication between the various disciplines can establish a common level of shared terminology: there remain different understandings, but still a transparent common discourse is developed. This work on terminology is connected to certain theories and 'bridging figures' which dominate the common discussion.

The other position above all points out that no real common understanding is possible. (We cannot maintain that the two positions differ completely. Here we recognise a tendency towards a more negative evaluation of the collective process in contrast to the above described more positive assessment.) The second 'position' presumes that the respective disciplines remain within their individual understanding of the term.

⁶² See on the topic of interdisciplinary communication Wilhelm Voßkamp (1987) 'Interdisziplinarität in den Geisteswissenschaften (am Beispiel einer Forschungsgruppe zur Funktionsgeschichte der Utopie)'. *Interdisziplinarität. Praxis-Herausforderung-Ideologie*. Jürgen Kocka (ed.), 92-105.

Additionally this position tends to underline the borders between the disciplines, which according to them remain unchanged.

On another level one can distinguish two ‘emotional’ attitudes towards the *Begriffsarbeit*. Some see it as on the whole rewarding work. Others experience it as ‘exhausting’ (*anstrengend*) or ‘troublesome, but sometimes necessary’ (*mühsam, aber hin und wieder notwendig*). Different explanations may be found for these views:

1 Pragmatic reasons: Especially for junior researchers participating in such a big organisational context as a Research Centre there are lots of bureaucratic tasks: coordination meetings, writing the proposal for the next period and having extra meetings with parts of or the whole research project. This can be experienced as an extra burden, delaying their own research, especially if they are still trying to qualify (on a disciplinary level).

2 Psychological/social reasons: Personal attitudes may also be important, for example, the preference for either individual or team work. One researcher mentioned that one positive aspect of interdisciplinary working was that it was ‘sociable’ and included team work as a more common form of work in this research context. As the discourse inside the project is part of a social process it is influenced by social factors, as many of the interviewees mentioned. One factor might therefore be the openness to learn from others and to consider differences as productive rather than as problematic.

3 A more disciplinary factor: an implicit context which might play a role is the dichotomy of ‘research on a phenomenon, material etc.’ versus ‘theory’. One hint lies in a comment from the social sciences, where *Begriffsarbeit* is contrasted with ‘the work on the material’. On the other hand, researchers from the humanities underline the importance of ‘theory’ or ‘reflexivity’. This point leads us to another aspect – the borders, which are experienced and at the same time ‘constructed’ by the different individual researchers.

5.2 Borders and the ‘other’

‘Notwithstanding many other aspects, there are two significant outcomes in the formation of disciplines [...]: disciplinary values and disciplinary others.’ (Teymur 2002: 100) ‘Disciplinary values’ emerge, when disciplines select ‘objects or certain phenomena’ to which they ‘attribute [...] significance’. This process constitutes ‘objects of knowledge’, hence ‘the disciplinary objects’ (Teymur 2002: 100). At the same time this process of disciplinary evolution produces ‘disciplinary others’, which are consequently emerging as excluded objects: ‘The process of creating values and their objects the disciplines create other values, other objects and other knowledge, hence, other disciplines’. (Teymur, Necdet 2002: 100) Consequently disciplines can also be defined by what they exclude or by their own exclusions (ibid.: 101). With regard to interdisciplinarity this means: ‘It is not sufficient to see *interdisciplinarity* as a project of cooperative relationships between mutually exclusive formations. [...] As a matter of fact, in the closely guarded territory of academic and scientific disciplines, interdisciplinarity is an area largely made up of ‘othernesses.’ (Teymur 2002: 101)

In the two projects a shift can be noted when we examine the interviews to highlight the borders between social sciences and humanities. Common to both projects is the finding that the main border does not seem to run between the humanities and social

sciences, but through the social sciences themselves, echoing the main border between the humanities and the natural sciences, that is between a more hermeneutical or theoretical approach and an approach which uses above all quantifiable data. Wolf Lepenies (1985) refers to the social sciences as a differentiated ‘third culture’, ‘in which since their emergence scientific and literary disciplines have been at odds with each other.’⁶³ (Lepenies, 1985: 11) This border was experienced by participants of both projects. Additionally in the case of Gießen where social sciences are a part of the interdisciplinary project another border was perceived. The social scientists we interviewed in Gießen in particular underlined a difference between an approach focused on the social (and historical) contextualisation of the subject (i.e. memory) versus a more text or image focused analysis.

The different composition of the two projects influenced the way in which the interviewees described their own (disciplinary) position and the ‘other’. In Cologne the project mainly involves the humanities and the natural and technical sciences whereas in Gießen the project researchers focus mainly on the social sciences and humanities.

How researchers construct these borders and to what degree they emphasize them depends on individual factors (as above) and the internal and external (inter)disciplinary context.

Individual experience of disciplinarity and interdisciplinarity and the researchers’ attitude towards it has always to be seen within its complex context relating to different factors. We presume that the images of ‘otherness’ addressed in the interviews are a result of a specific kind of setting and are not firm ‘images’. We therefore have to distinguish between the two projects if we want to find how disciplinary boundaries emerge and shift depending on the respective research context.

5.2.1 Collaborative Research Centre ‘*Erinnerungskulturen*’ (Memory Cultures) in Gießen

The most evident division felt by the social scientists in this specific research project was the different focus on memory. Different from the disciplinary approach of the humanities the social scientists understood memory as policy. They viewed memory cultures as ‘active processes’ where content is selected and structured hierarchically. One of the interviewees saw his role as ‘irritating’ the research context ‘productively’ (*‘produktiv verunsichern’*), by maintaining a minority position, focussing on the socio-historical aspect of memory.

The social scientists we interviewed saw their position as ‘in between’. They demarcated themselves not only from the research context, predominantly shaped by the humanities, but at the same time from their own disciplinary background – the political sciences: ‘Ironically I then found what was missing in the Collaborative Research Centre was also missing in my own discipline – the political sciences – namely to regard memory as ‘policy’.’⁶⁴

On the one hand, the specific interdisciplinary context of the humanities provoked the social scientists to underline the socio-political aspect of their analysis, whilst on the

⁶³ ‘Ich bin der Auffassung, dass man die Sozialwissenschaften als eine dritte Kultur bezeichnen kann, in der seit ihrem Entstehen szientifische und literarische Orientierungen einander gegenüberstehen.’

⁶⁴ ‘Ironischerweise habe ich dann gefunden, dass das was im SFB fehlte, auch in meiner Disziplin, der Politikwissenschaft fehlt, nämlich der Policybezug zur Erinnerung.’

other hand it allowed them to pursue a field of analysis and a view of memory, which is not very common in the political sciences. This was to consider the policies of history as a 'hardware' policy. According to the social scientific perspective the analysis of the political aspect of art has not been very much integrated by the humanities. One researcher explained this by referring to an art historical view on monuments as art. This view rejects the political approach as a 'profane approach'.

Concerning methods and theory, the political scientists described their research as 'qualitative' research. Both researchers described their work as focused on the 'material', the phenomenon, which determines the approach, text and methods used. The methods did not have to emerge out of a theoretical 'preliminary decision' but are the result of the research topic, as one of the social scientists explained. This was labelled 'grounded theory'. The question of methods is subordinated. Referring to the debates on memory terms and concepts, the other senior researcher from the social sciences did not consider the work on terminology significant for the concrete work in their own project: 'It had little consequences for the project. Also this is somehow established at such a level of abstraction that it was not very useful when it came to operationalizing it. I prefer to start from the material.'⁶⁵

The interviewed historian described his discipline as 'in between' the analysis of research material and theory. He referred to an image created by the historian Reinhart Koselleck to describe history and the philosophy of history. Koselleck represented their characteristics and relation by using the image of a mole (representing history) which burrows into the earth, while balloons are fixed to it lifting it up (representing the philosophy of history). The relationship between the mole and the suspended balloons represents, as the researcher said, 'a problem of interdisciplinarity' (*'Interdisziplinaritätsproblem'*). He 'translated' this contrast symbolised by the mole being dragged into the air by the balloons into the disciplinary difference between for example 'a historian of the Middle Ages' and a linguist. This 'is not a problem', as he said, as such differences can be 'experienced playfully and with irony and humour'. However he went on to say that such differences can lead to very serious and controversial discussions.⁶⁶

The self-understanding of the historian resembled the implicit image of the social scientists concerning a relative closeness to 'the material' or 'the phenomenon'. (Interestingly even the connotations of the language used were related to one another. For example the term 'grounded' used by the social scientist and the image of 'the mole burrowing in the earth' used by the historian were related as metaphors.) Additionally the historian underlined later on in the interview the relative closeness of the discipline of history to the social sciences in comparison to for example literary studies.

Even though the literature historian interviewed said that his own disciplinary origin was closely related to theories of narratology and concentrated on the analysis of text, he referred very much to the different disciplinary influences which he integrated into

⁶⁵ 'Das hat aber wenig Auswirkung auf das Projektgeschehen gehabt. Das ist dann irgendwie auch auf so einer Höhe angesiedelt, dass das konkret für eine operationalisierbare Fragestellung auch nicht viel bringt. Ich geh dann auch lieber vom Material aus.'

⁶⁶ 'Dieses Spiel, das da also der Maulwurf unten ist und die Luftballons ihn immer hochziehen, das ist ein Interdisziplinaritätsproblem. Und das erleben wir spielerisch und manchmal mit Ironie und Witz. Wir haben keine Probleme damit, außer dass wir konkrete Probleme haben, wenn es um Sachen geht und dann wird gerungen.'

his own work. On the whole he also described fewer borders and instead underlined the productive influences he integrated from other disciplines, such as psychology (Welzer/ Echterhoff), philosophy, sociology (Halbwachs, Berger/Luckmann) and history (Koselleck, Hayden White). When asked how he would consider his work in relation to cultural studies, he differentiated between cultural studies from an 'Anglo-Saxon tradition' and *Kulturwissenschaften* from a German tradition, including researchers such as the philosopher Ernst Cassirer and the sociologist Max Weber. Similar to the social scientists, he pointed to the difference between a more textual or image centred approach in literature or art history versus a more contextualising socio-political view towards the same subject in the social sciences. This he experienced in the interdisciplinary working groups.

A significant border is experienced in the specific research context common to the social sciences and the humanities participating in the *SFB*. Yet, the interviewed senior researcher (political science) regards the hermeneutical tradition, 'Dilthey and the consequences', as common background for all analyses used in the research centre: 'We make hermeneutics, full stop.'⁶⁷

Thus, the most significant border coincides with the view expressed in the other research project – the opposition of qualitative versus quantitative methods or hermeneutic versus empirical-statistical research.

5.2.2 Cultural Studies Centre '*Medien und kulturelle Kommunikation*' (Media and cultural communication) Cologne

The researchers we interviewed in the project all came from the humanities (however some of them had a background in the social sciences). With regard to the question of the extent to which they experienced or saw borders between disciplinary fields, their descriptions were connected to their research field of cultural media studies. The researchers mainly demarcated their research from sociological media studies (not participating in the project) and from the natural and technical sciences (participating in the project). They saw quantitative empirical work as the most remote approach to their own research. In their own work on the contrary hermeneutical text or images and more theoretical analysis predominated. This impulse reflecting the sciences ('*wissenschaftsreflexive*') of the respective field was highlighted by most of the interviewed researchers.

Two aspects are important with regard to the way the researchers described the main disciplinary borders. One is the project positioning itself in the context of a (German) debate on the *Kulturwissenschaften*. The other is the demarcation of the project from the *Medien- and Kommunikationswissenschaften* in the social sciences (see section 4). Accordingly, some of our interviewees expressed their wish to establish a 'transdisciplinary field' connected to the debate on the *Kulturwissenschaften*. They spoke of a field which could involve the humanities, the social sciences and the natural sciences, corresponding to the programmatic concept of their specific project. Even though they spoke of borders, they underlined the need to overcome them.

One senior researcher (linguist) acknowledged two different *Begriffskulturen* in his project: the empirically-statistic working sciences and the hermeneutical or

⁶⁷ 'Wir machen Hermeneutik, Punkt. Alles Dilthey und die Folgen [...].'

‘*kulturwissenschaftlich*’ working ‘*Wissenschaften*’⁶⁸. Based on the aspiration to establish a transdisciplinary field, he saw the border between them as ‘inhibiting knowledge’ (*erkenntnisverhindernd*), which needs to be overcome. Significantly he used the term *Begriffskultur* (culture of concepts) for the two disciplinary fields, which are both limited in their *Erkenntnismöglichkeiten* (possible scholarly findings), as he said. Both fields can profit from each other. It can be fruitful for the more ‘metaphorically’ working humanities to be confronted with expectations of consistency and coherence (*Konsistenzenerwartungen und Stringenzerwartungen*) of the empirical sciences. On the other hand the empirical sciences can be described as ‘normative’ (*definitiv*) and from the humanities perspective as limited. Later on the linguist also contrasted his own approach of cultural media studies with the ‘*statistische Wirkungsforschung*’. He distinguished between empirical research in the communication studies and his own research on media, which as he said was done by using ‘empirical stuff’, but was predominantly ‘motivated by theory’. Another senior researcher specializing in ‘theatre, film and television studies’ (*Theater-, Film und Fernsehwissenschaften*) pointed out a similar border, again referring to the research in the ‘*Medien- und Kommunikationsforschung*’ of the social sciences, which distinguishes between different categories of research, namely on the recipients, the impact and the communicators (*Rezipienten-, Wirkungsforschung* and *Kommunikatorforschung*). On the other hand his individual focus in media research was on the analysis of this academic discourse, its genealogy and history. Thus the weight lies here on the reflection on sciences (cf. section 4.1.2).

A third interview partner (philosophy) saw a division between ‘empirical, statistical working disciplines’ and more theoretical or reflexive working fields. Additionally, he pointed to the differences between informatics and psychology on one side and the humanities on the other as ‘*quantitative organisierte Prozesse*’ versus more text- or image centred analysis.

The junior researcher who was interviewed (‘theatre, film and television studies’) referred to his more immediate experience of the border between these two fields. He had previously worked at another university where ‘*kulturwissenschaftliche*’ film studies and the social-scientific communication studies (*Publizistik- und Kommunikationswissenschaft*) had to develop a degree programme together. Differing from his experience in the SFB in Cologne he experienced this co-operation as problematic. That may be the reason why he emphasized (more than his colleagues) the border between the socio-scientific and the ‘*kulturwissenschaftliche*’ perspective on media. For him the main difference was the way in which the fields work with categories, terminology and concepts. While the understanding of the term ‘media’ remains firm in the social scientific approach and is mainly focused on mass media, the ‘*kulturwissenschaftliche*’ position questions such a definitive term and opens it up to other fields.

This distinction points to a more general difference indicated by the junior researcher later on, namely between ‘empirical work’ and ‘theoretical work’. He called them two ‘perspectives’ (*Fluchtpunkte*) which did not necessarily have to coincide with two disciplinary fields, social sciences or humanities, as parts of the social sciences are more interested in reflexivity and theory. The linguist also presumed that the border does not lie between the social sciences and the humanities. While the senior researcher from philosophy referred to a general approach as a momentum connecting

⁶⁸ ‘*zwischen den empirisch arbeitenden Wissenschaften, also den empirisch statistisch arbeitenden Wissenschaften und den, im weiteren Sinne, hermeneutischen oder kulturwissenschaftlich arbeitenden Wissenschaften*’

parts of the two fields, the linguist referred more to a thematic field (which is also connected to theoretical and methodological debates), namely the field of ‘Cultural Studies’. He stated with regard to the social sciences: ‘of course there are parts of sociology, like Hörning and others [...] who have opened up to Cultural Studies and from there you get very interesting points of interference. However, there are also parts of sociology where the word ”culture” is an ”insult”.’⁶⁹

Interestingly, the junior researcher mentioned an aspect which did not appear in the other interviews in Cologne, but in the interviews with the *SFB* Gießen. This might be due to his experience of the difference between media research in the social sciences and media research in the humanities. He distinguished between an interest in ‘aesthetic questions’ on one hand and ‘political and social questions’ on the other. He said that the ‘political questions’ could also appear in ‘*kulturwissenschaftliche*’ research on film but then they would be discussed using completely different methods.

5.3 Conclusions

Both the way in which the researchers experienced interdisciplinarity and how they saw disciplinary borders might influence the way in which they define the effects and aims of interdisciplinarity. Different expectations and understanding of interdisciplinarity were articulated by the researchers in our interviews. These definitions are related to forms of disciplinarity which have been labelled in the vast literature on this topic as ‘multi-, inter- or transdisciplinarity’. However, these terminologies were only used a few times by the interview partners.

We can distinguish between slightly different gradations of expectations towards and experiences of interdisciplinarity. One main difference is the degree to which people see interdisciplinarity as a form of knowledge production changing the disciplines themselves. We could distinguish between an understanding of interdisciplinarity pointed toward cognitive changes and a (mentioned less) more ‘instrumental’ understanding of interdisciplinarity. These two positions do not exclude each other and were sometimes used interchangeably. Yet, we would like to indicate two areas in which the researchers made similar emphases in their expectations and work.

The definitions expressed below presumably indicate an understanding of interdisciplinarity which is more common and characteristic of the humanities and social sciences. The view which most of researchers had in common was that interdisciplinary exchange leads to more self-reflexivity in the disciplines. Disciplines become more self-conscious of their own position and methods because they are confronted with other methods and perspectives. What this means for the disciplines may be interpreted differently. Some researchers did not think that the borders between the disciplines were transgressed. Other interview partners believed that interdisciplinary discourse can modify their own perspectives and also create questions which occasionally lead to new so-called ‘transdisciplinary fields’.

⁶⁹ ‘natürlich gibt es Teile der Soziologie wie Hörning und andere [...] die sich zu den Cultural Studies geöffnet haben und da gibt es dann wieder ganz unheimlich interessante Interferenzpunkte. Aber es gibt auch Teile der Soziologie, für die das Wort ‘Kultur’ ein Schimpfwort ist.’

Another position directed more towards an ‘instrumental’ understanding was the definition of interdisciplinarity as problem oriented. Interdisciplinarity was defined by one researcher as a ‘natural drive’ in the disciplines, as they all require knowledge from one another. He also described interdisciplinarity as co-operation between different disciplinary experts. Here this co-operation can either be understood as a way to gather different kinds of expert knowledge to get a more effective and complete result, but it can also be regarded as a way to contextualise different approaches to knowledge, which interact.

Evidently these heterogeneous views on interdisciplinarity show that in our description of a research project we can not speak of one form of fixed interdisciplinarity, but a research space which has to be ‘filled’ by individuals. What the most important requirements for interdisciplinarity are was expressed by one researcher as follows:

I think the most important factors are in fact the people, their fantasies and their capacity to be imaginative. I think that is the most important maxim for teaching and research policy. You can try every kind of policy, which will only work if individuals in the different academic institutions will regard it as their hearts’ desire and will engage themselves. With interdisciplinarity a certain ‘laxness’ towards their own disciplinary ‘property’ is required, the ‘*Besitzstanddenken*’, which most disciplines cure: the pleasure to transgress or sometimes even violate or infringe borders is part of it. This is the most important motivation of the individual, but also of the motivation related to the community. I also think that this is necessary, because the disciplinary borders do not remain firm, but they have to continually be developed.⁷⁰

Research policy has to provide and create the conditions where individuals can develop and pursue this desire to transgress the disciplinary borders. Yet, the personal interest to transgress these borders cannot be imposed in a top-down-procedure, as our interview partner from the DFG stated with regard to interdisciplinary policy.

⁷⁰ ‘Die Voraussetzungen liegen, glaube ich, tatsächlich in den Personen, in der Phantasie, in dem Einfallsreichtum der einzelnen beteiligten Personen. Das ist glaube ich die oberste bildungs- und forschungspolitische Maxime überhaupt. Du kannst alle möglichen Politiken überhaupt, die nur dann anschlagen, wenn die Personen in den einzelnen Bildungsinstitutionen dies als ihre Herzenssache begreifen, die Einsatz bringen. Bei Fragen der Interdisziplinarität gehört eine gewisse Laxheit gegenüber disziplinierten Eigentums dazu, des Besitzstanddenkens, das die meisten Disziplinen pflegen. Es gehört die Lust dazu Grenzen zu überschreiten und auch mal zu verletzen. Das gehört dazu. Das ist die Hauptvoraussetzung, die individuelle, aber auch community-bezogene Motivation. Aber ich glaube, dass das auch notwendig ist, weil die disziplinierten Grenzen natürlich nicht feststehen, sondern immer wieder sich neu entwickeln müssen.’

Summary

1. In Germany third-party funding for collaborative research projects in the field of the social sciences and humanities is increasing, which can lead to an increase of interdisciplinary collaborations between disciplinary fields. Interdisciplinarity has been called for from both political parties and advisory boards like the *Wissenschaftsrat*. What this implies and aims for is often vague. If interdisciplinarity is specified it addresses mainly the collaboration between humanities and natural or technical sciences. Interdisciplinary working is mostly connected with two possible purposes: problem centred or 'applied' research. In the current debates and programmatic statements of the various stakeholders interdisciplinary collaboration between the social sciences and humanities has not been brought up as a topic.
2. Lately applications from the humanities and social sciences for third party funding have increased. This is also due to the fact that the basic financial means of a university (the 'traditional' financing) in these disciplinary fields, especially the humanities have decreased. Consequently demands coming from the humanities have emphasised the need to adapt the third-party funding policy to the specificities of the humanities. Different papers (*Wissenschaftsrat*, *DFG* Conference in Maria Laach) point to certain characteristics of research in the humanities. They include the importance of individual research, the importance of communication and discourse as well as the academic freedom to pursue questions which are not necessarily connected to applied research aims. These aspects have been integrated to some extent in the private and public funding programmes. On the whole the 'open' programmes, which do not define one particular research subject are favoured by the *DFG* and the *Wissenschaftsrat*. Funding programmes should sustain research, which as regards to its content is developed by the academe.
3. The *DFG* calls for interdisciplinarity in all of its co-ordinated programmes. Still the *DFG* does not consider this the most important criterion for the acceptance of a proposal. One representative from the German Research Foundation stressed that neither the research subject nor interdisciplinarity should be enforced by a 'top-down-procedure'. As the most important review criterion 'academic quality' is addressed. This could lead to the implementation of primarily disciplinary perspectives. The structure of the *DFG* is multidisciplinary as all disciplines operate under one umbrella. This facilitates interdisciplinary proposals. Additionally interdisciplinarity is also sustained by the review practice. During the review procedure every discipline which participates in compiling the proposal also has to be represented in the peer review group. The Grants Committee deciding on the acceptance or rejection of research proposals is always multidisciplinary.
4. We could see in the two case studies we examined that interdisciplinary research projects can be organised in different ways and they may show some predominance of certain disciplinary fields which are part of the research project. This may influence the way the individual researchers position themselves in a disciplinary manner towards the particular interdisciplinary research context of the project.
5. Pre-conditions which sustain the success of an interdisciplinary research initiative can be earlier interdisciplinary research initiatives. In both case

studies earlier initiatives either on the political and/or academic level had already established common interdisciplinary research areas and a social network, from which work could be continued. This indicates already the important role individuals play regarding their motivation and attitude towards interdisciplinary collaboration.

6. Both projects were organised along disciplinary and interdisciplinary lines. Their differences reflect their concepts representing their research fields (media and cultural communication versus memory cultures). In both projects various institutionalised forms of interdisciplinary communication exist. These are colloquia, interdisciplinary working groups, workshops and conferences. This is probably a result of the respective aims of the projects but at the same time stems from a demand of the *DFG*. Important for the communication between the different disciplines are common research fields (like memory or media). They take over an important role similar to authors which are perceived as 'bridging figures' by different disciplines. The discussion of the particular disciplinary concepts and theories as well as theories which are common to different disciplinary fields can lead to new terms and perspectives common to the specific research project. The necessity to work on a common language has been stressed especially by the *kulturwissenschaftliches* project.
7. We consider the need for interdisciplinary communication essential in an interdisciplinary research field because of differences which may arise due to perceived or imagined borders between the disciplines. Three oppositions appeared in our case studies. Some interview partners mentioned the perception of a border which runs between the social sciences including history and the humanities. The difference was seen between a socio-historical contextualisation of culture versus a more 'text centred' analysis. Another possible difference was evident in the distinction between theory and 'material'. This indicates a stronger division between what one could describe as theory versus empirical research. Yet, we can see, that the social sciences point to an aspect which connects them to the humanities, namely the 'hermeneutical-qualitative' approach. Therefore the third border which was identified in both projects addressed qualitative versus quantitative methods. This division also exists in the social sciences.
8. In our case study the participants from the social sciences worked predominantly qualitatively. Common to both the humanities and social sciences is mainly the focus on interpretation. For that reason reflexivity towards description and interpretative language is crucial. Consequently we conclude that the discussions about terminology and interpretative concepts is of major importance.
9. As we noticed in our case studies the interdisciplinary communication process can cause reflections on a researcher's personal disciplinary position. At the same time it may trigger new questions and accordingly produce new fields of knowledge.

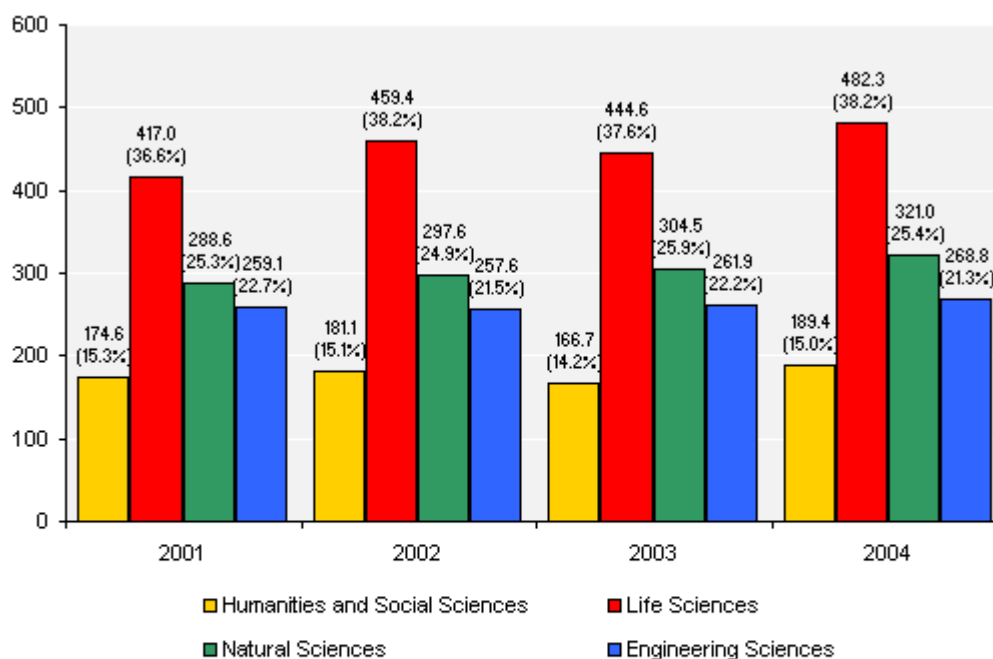
Tables

Table 1: Origin of financial resources (DFG)⁷¹

| | In mill. Euro | % |
|---|-----------------|--------------|
| Federal Government (<i>Bund</i>) | | |
| Institutional funding of the DFG | 746.6 | 57.1 |
| Institutional funding of the DFG (separately financed) | 4.9 | 0.4 |
| Special allocations for earmarked projects | 6.8 | 0.5 |
| Sum | 758.3 | 58.0 |
| Federal States (<i>Länder</i>) | | |
| Institutional funding of the DFG | 540.6 | 41.4 |
| Institutional funding of the DFG (separately financed) | 4.7 | 0.4 |
| Sum | 545.3 | 41.8 |
| Donors' Association for the Promotion of Science and Humanities in Germany (<i>Stifterverbund für die dt. Wissenschaft</i>) | 2.2 | 0.2 |
| Allocation of the EU | 0.1 | ---- |
| Allocations from private sources | 0.5 | ---- |
| DFG's own income | 0.7 | 0.1 |
| Sum | 3.5 | 0.3 |
| Total income | 1, 307.1 | 100.0 |
| Plus carry-over funds from 2003 | 2.1 | |
| Total | 1, 309.2 | |

⁷¹ Source (Table 1-5) http://www.dfg.de/dfg_im_profil/_zahlen_und_fakten/mittelverwendung/, 4.1.2006

Table 2: Total research funding by area of research, 2001 to 2004 (in million euros)



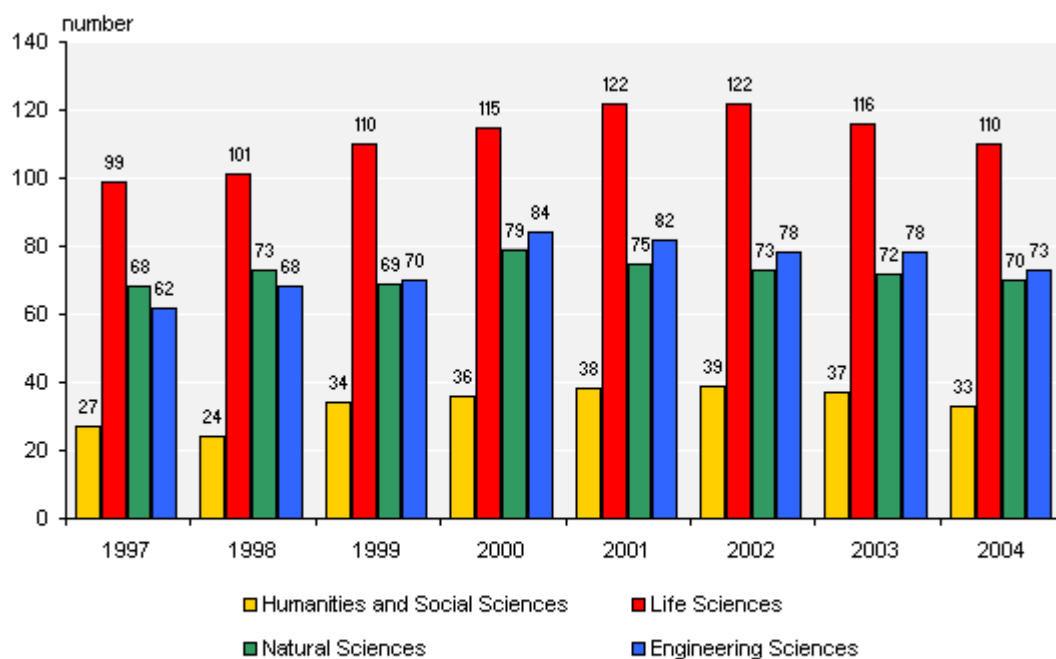
* Based on the Individual Grants Programme, Direct Support for Young Researchers, and Coordinated Programmes (with Humanities Research Centres)

** Research areas are categorised according to the new subject classification system introduced by the DFG in 2004. Figures from previous years were adjusted accordingly.

Table 3: Use of financial resources (DFG)

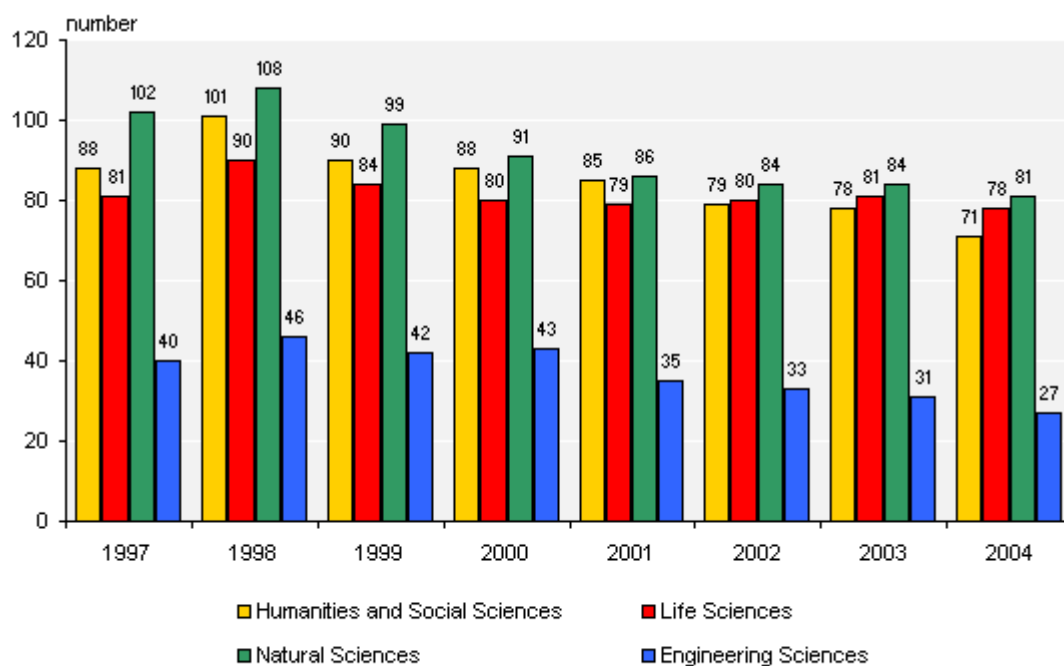
| | In mill. Euro | % |
|---|----------------|--------------|
| For general research support | 740.2 | 56.6 |
| For Collaborative Research Centres | 359.9 | 27.5 |
| For Research Training Groups | 72.4 | 5.5 |
| For the Emmy Noether Programme | 33.3 | 2.6 |
| For the Leibniz Programme | 15.1 | 1.2 |
| For Research funding from special allocations | 10.4 | 0.8 |
| For DfG Research Centres | 28.0 | 2.1 |
| Administrative expenses | 48.7 | 3.7 |
| Total expenses | 1,308.0 | 100.0 |
| plus carry-over funds from 2004 | 1.2 | |
| Total | 1,309.2 | |

Table 4: DFG Collaborative Research Centres* 1997 to 2004



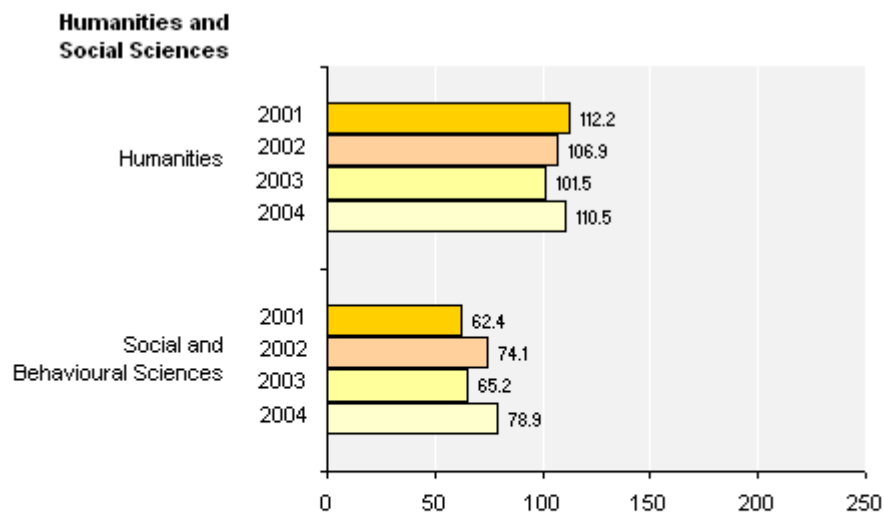
* Number of established programmes at the end of the year including Transfer Units (since 1996), Transregional Collaborative Research Centres (since 2000) and Cultural Studies Research Centres (since 1999)

Table 5: DFG Research Training Groups* 1997 to 2004



* Number of established programmes at the end of the year

Table 6: Level of funding* by research area ** 2001 to 2004 (in million euro)



* Based on the Individual Grants Programme, Direct Support for Young Researchers, and Coordinated Programmes (with Humanities Research Centres)

** Research areas are categorised according to the new subject classification system introduced by the DFG in 2004. Figures from previous years were adjusted accordingly.

Bibliography

Apitzsch, Ursula and Irini Siouti (2006) *Interdisciplinary Research Policies and Practices in Germany*. Unpublished ms.

Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung (BMBF - Federal Ministry of Education and Research) (2005) Antwort der Bundesregierung auf die Große Anfrage der Abgeordneten Katherina Reiche, Thomas Rachel, Dr. Maria Böhmer, weiterer Abgeordneter und der Fraktion der CDU/CSU. *Lage der Forschung in Deutschland*. Drucksache 15/4793. 31 January 2005 . <http://www.bmbf.de/pub/GA-lage_forschungsfoederung.pdf> 17 May 2005.

Bogner, Alexander, Littig, Beate and Wolfgang Menz (eds.) (2005) *Das Experteninterview. Theorie, Methode, Anwendung*. Opladen: Leske+Budrich.

Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung (BMBF - Federal Ministry of Education and Research) (2004) *Bundesbericht Forschung*.

Bund-Länder Kommission (2005) *Information on the Bund-Länder-Commission for Educational Planning and Research Promotion*. <<http://www.blk-bonn.de>>.

DFG (2002) „Perspektiven der Forschung und ihrer Förderung 2002-2006“ <<http://www.dfg.de>>

DFG Jahresbericht 2003 <<http://www.dfg.de>> 15 July 2005.

Rateike, Jutta ed. (2003) *Einblicke - Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaften in der DFG*. Bonn: Lemmens Verlags- & Mediengesellschaft.

Fritz Thyssen Foundation (2004) Annual Report 2003/ 2004.

Frühwald, Wolfgang, et al. (1991) *Geisteswissenschaften heute: eine Denkschrift*. Frankfurt/ Main.

Gollnick, Ines (2005) “Die Unaufdringliche: Ursula Sowa“ *Das Parlament* Nr. 12, 21 March. 19 May 2005. <<http://www.das-parlament.de/2005/12/Kulissen/003.html>>

Jäger, Ludwig (2005) *Anmerkungen aus Anlaß der geplanten Einrichtung eines Studienganges ‚Kulturwissenschaft(en)‘ an der Universität Koblenz*. Koblenz 12 January. 1-10. E-mail to Rebecca Krebs July 2005.

Kocka, Jürgen (ed.) (1987) *Interdisziplinarität. Praxis-Herausforderung-Ideologie*. Frankfurt Main: Suhrkamp Verlag.

Krebs, Rebecca, Siouti, Irini, Apitzsch, Ursula and Silke Wenk (2005) *Disciplinary Boundaries between the Social Sciences and Humanities: National Report on Germany*. <<http://www.hull.ac.uk/researchintegration/reports.htm>> .

Krebs, Rebecca and Silke Wenk (2005) *Disciplinary Barriers between the Social Sciences and Humanities*. Current debates about the construction of knowledge in the social sciences and humanities and the impact of these on disciplinisation. Comparative Report. <<http://www.hull.ac.uk/researchintegration/reports.htm>>

Kuhn, Thomas S. (1963) *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Lepenies, Wolf (1985) *Die drei Kulturen. Soziologie zwischen Literatur und Wissenschaft*. München: Hanser Verlag.

“*Neue Akzente für die Förderung geisteswissenschaftlicher Forschung*“ 2003: 17. acc. 23 May 2005 <www.dfg.de/aktuelles_presse/download/foerderinitiative_gw_tagung.pdf>

Proposal (*Finanzierungsantrag*) (2005) Forschungsprogramm der vierten Bewilligungsphase 2006-2008. Bericht über die dritte Bewilligungsphase. Sonderforschungsbereich 434 Erinnerungskulturen. Part 1 Justus-Liebig-Universität Gießen. 15 April.

Snow, Charles Percy (1964) *The Two Cultures and a Second Look. An Expanded Version of the Two Cultures and the Scientific Revolution*. Cambridge.

Teymur, Necdet (2002) ‘Space Between Disciplines’. *Cultural Studies. Interdisciplinarity and Translation*. Ed. Stefan Herbrechter Amsterdam, New York: Rodopi B.V., 97-112

Wallerstein, Immanuel et al. (1996) *Open the Social Sciences. Report of the Gulbenkian Commission on the Restructuring of the Social Sciences*. Stanford University Press, Stanford, California.

Winnacker, Ernst-Ludwig (2005) *DFG Neujahrsansprache*. 11.1.2005, Berlin.

Winnacker, Ernst-Ludwig (2006) *Statement des DFG Präsidenten. Gemeinsame Pressekonferenz von DFG und Wissenschaftsrat zur Exzellenzinitiative am 20.1.2006*.

Wissenschaftsrat (1994): *Stellungnahme des Wissenschaftsrates zur Weiterführung des Graduiertenkollegprogramms*. Schwerin.

Wissenschaftsrat (2006) *Empfehlungen zur Entwicklung und Förderung der Geisteswissenschaften in Deutschland*. Berlin, 27.1.2006. acc. 12 February 2006. <<http://www.wissenschaftsrat.de/texte/7068-06.pdf>>

Websites

<<http://www.dfg.de>>

<<http://www.fritz-thyssen-stiftung.de>>

<<http://www.gerda-henkel-stiftung.de>>

<<http://www.uni-giessen.de/erinnerungskulturen/home/sfb-concept.php>>

<<http://www.uni-giessen.de/erinnerungskulturen/home/sfb-structure.php>>

<http://www.uni-koeln.de/inter-fak/fk-427/prog/prog_fk_intro.html>

<<http://www.wissenschaftsrat.de>>

<<http://www.volkswagenstiftung.de>>