I. Culture and ways of life

Using different methodological avenues into philosophy, sociology and educational science, the cluster examines questions relating to the binding nature of cultural practices. The aim of the research is to develop building blocks for a theory of culture in which the normativity of cultural actions is understood as a singular fact of culture and the concept of “cultural practice” is discussed in the context of cultural science and cultural philosophy theories. Questions of pluralism in modern societies, the order of (the) socially obligatory norm(s) transcending historical ruptures and social differences and the historical reconstruction and systematic discussion of possibility conditions and validity claims are at the heart of the research.

- Forms of representative culture
  (Clemens Albrecht, Sociology, Koblenz campus)
- Ways of life and action. Normative dimensions of cultural philosophy
  (Christian Bermes, Philosophy, Landau campus)
- Signatures of the Modern Age. Reasonable pluralism
  (Jürgen Goldstein, Philosophy, Koblenz campus)
- Methodologicalisation and normativity.
  (Alfred Langewand, Educational Science, Landau campus)

II. Embodiment and culture

How is normativity embodied? The example of circumcision, recently the subject of controversial debate, enables an illustrative study not only of the genesis and transformation in religious history but also of the normative significance of a bodily rite as a religious or cultural identity marker and for this to be harnessed in the cultural sciences debate. Close ties thus arise to ethnology and the issue of rituals as embodied forms of justification whose normative dimension has been paid but little attention in research to date. The philosophical question of the normative status of cultural embodiments in the conflict between bodily practices, narratives and arguments follows on from this, which is to be explored against the backdrop of a universalistic conception of human dignity and human rights.

- Social aesthetics as a new perspective on the embodiment of culture
  (Andreas Ackermann, Ethnology, Koblenz campus)
- Rituals, identities and the significance of historical processes
  (Michaela Bauks, Protestant Theology, Koblenz campus)
- Rituals, identities and the space of reasons
  (Matthias Jung, Philosophy, Koblenz campus)

III. The cultural public sphere and the binding nature of language

The third research area deals with the cultural fact of language. From a linguistic studies point of view, the varying research areas different media distinguish between are increasingly calling into question the one-sided focus on scripticism seen in linguistic criticism and linguistic standardisation. Whilst it would be wrong to do away with rules and standardisation, these do however need to be realigned, for instance in relation to the description of different communicative practices and their respective (linguistic) latitudes. In literature studies too, the question of protecting reading behaviour in pluralist societies is virulent. The canon is certainly no longer beyond all doubt; it must be secured through argumentation, whereby the justification criteria vary. In particular in terms of institutions like literary criticism, school, university or libraries, the question must be asked as to which criteria are decisive in each case and what their relationship is to ritualised practices of reading and selection. This also fundamentally entails testing the value of literature in the field of education and in terms of the formation of a culturally rooted identity.

- Linguistic norms in scientific disciplines and in the public sphere
  (Sabine Diao-Klaeger, Romance Languages and Literature, Landau campus, Jan Georg Schneider, German Language and Literature, Landau campus)
- The value of literature. Cultural orientation through the formation of literary canons
  (Stefan Neuhaus, German Language and Literature, Koblenz Campus, Uta Schaffers, German Language and Literature, Koblenz campus)
Rhineland-Palatinate Research Initiative

The research initiative of the Federal State of Rhineland-Palatinate is funded by the Ministry of Education, Science, Further Training and Culture and aims to hone the profile of the Rhineland Palatinate’s universities. Before they were put in place, the research priorities were evaluated by external scholars, with the ultimate decision on the establishment of research priorities then being taken by the university senate. The University of Koblenz-Landau currently has the following research priorities:

Humanities
Cultural orientation and normative allegiance

Communication, media, politics
How politically relevant discourses are conveyed, perceived and processed

Environmental sciences
Land-water interaction under the influence of anthropogenic stressors

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Henricus Marcellus Germanus, Germania, Florence, pre-1490

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