

## **2. Research Project: Literature on the Move** (about 10-12 pages)

### **2.1 Key challenges, state of the art and relevant references** (1-2 pages plus max. 10 references)

*Give a short review of the key challenges that are at hand in the chosen field(s) and the project wants to address. Provide a concise review of the state of the art in the respective research area(s) and demonstrate how your project is linked to international research. List a maximum of ten relevant references.*

#### **Key challenges**

There is no doubt that the Austrian literary field has become more diverse over the last two decades. Authors who have come to Austria as immigrants, such as Dimitré Dinev, Vladimir Vertlib and Julya Rabinowich, have been praised in the media and won major prizes. At the same time, many of these writers have expressed the difficulty of being accepted by publishers (see for example Dimitré Dinev in Stippinger 2000: 42 and Struhar 2005). Moreover, they feel marginalised by being categorised as ‘migrant writers’ and demand to be acknowledged as artists, or in Seher Çakir’s words: “Ich mache Literatur und Punkt! Ich will in keine Schublade gesteckt werden. Ganz egal, welches Etikett man ihr gibt.“ (Disoski 2010) This paradox of success and marginalisation has also been observed in other countries (see Kamm et al. 2010 for Switzerland for example). But how can we explain it? Based on Pierre Bourdieu’s analysis of the literary field, we hypothesise that we are currently witnessing a major change in the Austrian literary field. This national domain is slowly being transnationalised by processes generally described as globalisation, including migration. Of course, this change also meets with opposition by those actors in the literary field (not only writers but also publishers, critics and academics) fearing to lose their dominant position in the course of this process. This fight for domination, as Bourdieu calls it, finds expression, amongst others, in attempts to marginalise the works of those challenging the field. It is this dynamic that our project intends to analyse in more detail. We will identify the factors that have opened up possibilities for immigrant writers<sup>1</sup> in the Austrian literary field and study how these authors have been positioning themselves through their texts and have been positioned by others, including publishers, critics and academics, in the course of their career.

#### **State of the art**

Research on immigrant writing in Austria is a recent phenomenon compared to other European countries. While first publications on what at the time was called guest-worker writing in Germany appeared in the 1980s, there was no research on Austrian immigrant writers before 2000. To some extent, this was due to the lack of literary works to discuss. Unlike in Germany, Switzerland or Belgium, no literary publications have emerged from labour immigration to Austria. And the writers who stayed after the Second World War or came as refugees were not discussed as immigrants. Only in recent years, with cultural initiatives such as the literary prize “schreiben zwischen den kulturen” that aims to promote immigrant writing in Austria and the success of writers such as Dimitré Dinev, Michael Stavaric or Vladimir Vertlib, both the general and the academic interest in works written by immigrated authors have increased. However, sociological studies are rare (see Sievers 2008, 2009a, Vlasta 2011). Rather, the focus has

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<sup>1</sup> In the context of this proposal, we use the term immigrant writing for authors who at some stage of their lives immigrated to Austria and became writers here. As we explain below, we do not assume that this experience necessarily influences their positionings in the Austrian literary field or their writing. In fact, in our earlier work we have highlighted the differences between two of the immigrant authors we intend to discuss in more detail in this project (Sievers 2009a). We intend to find out why the positionings between immigrant authors differ. Hence, each of these authors will be discussed as an individual emerging from a particular context.

been on the negotiation of identities in individual works (see Bürger-Koftis 2008, Fiddler 2006, Schweiger 2005, Vlasta 2008).

This focus strongly coincides with the debates taking place on immigrant and ethnic minority writing in other countries. While the social conditions of the emergence of such writing were an important issue in the first studies on this immigrant literature, particularly in Germany (see e.g. Zielke 1985 and Reeg 1988 for the emergence of the so-called guest-worker literature in Germany), such studies have become rare since the beginning of the 1990s when an important paradigm shift took place in this field (for exceptions see e.g. Jules-Rosette 1998 on the *Présence Africaine* movement in France and Ranasinha 2007 on South-Asian writing in 20th century Britain). Scholars such as Immacolata Amodeo (1996) rightly criticized the first sociological approaches for maintaining the hierarchies between national literatures as norms and immigrant writing as deviance from these norms. By contrast, Amodeo posed – as did Homi Bhaba (1994) for the Anglophone context – that these writers expressly set out to question such hierarchies in their texts. This paradigm shift has inspired new readings of immigrant and ethnic minority literature all over the world, with the most recent publications showing how the texts written by immigrant and ethnic minority authors have initiated a discursive transnationalisation of nations, such as Italy (Parati 2005), Germany (Adelson 2005, Cheesman 2007), the Netherlands (Minnaard 2008) and Switzerland (Kamm et al. 2010). These latest approaches and the above-mentioned more recent sociological approaches (Jules-Rosette 1998 and Ranasinha 2007) will serve as a point of departure for our project.

### **Most relevant references<sup>2</sup>**

Adelson, L. A. (2005) *The Turkish Turn in Contemporary German Literature: Toward a New Critical Grammar of Migration*. New York: Palgrave.

Cheesman, T. (2007) *Novels of Turkish German Settlement. Cosmopolite Fictions*. Rochester, New York: Camden House.

Jules-Rosette, B. (1998) *Black Paris: The African Writers' Landscape*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Kamm, M./ Spoerri, B./ Rothenbühler, D./ D'Amato, G. (2010) (eds) *Diskurse in die Weite: Kosmopolitische Räume in den Literaturen der Schweiz*. Zürich: Seismo.

Minnaard, L. (2008) *New Germans, New Dutch*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

Parati, G. (2005) *Migration Italy: The Art of Talking Back in a Destination Culture*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Ranasinha, R. (2007) *South Asian Writers in Twentieth-century Britain*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Sievers, W. (2008) 'Writing politics: the emergence of immigrant writing in West Germany and Austria', in *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 34, 8, 2008, 1217-1235.

Vlasta, S. (2008) *Mit Engelszungen und Bilderspuren ein neues Selbstverständnis erzählen – Ein Vergleich deutsch- und englischsprachiger Literatur im Kontext von Migration*. Wien: Dissertation.

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<sup>2</sup> A full list of references used in this proposal can be found at the end of the text.

## **2.2 Objectives of the project, problem choice and research question(s)** (1-2 pages)

*Formulate the objectives of your project in the context of the state of the art and what concrete problem you want to address. Explain your motivations and reasons why you choose this specific problem. What are the challenging and innovative aspects of the proposed research? Specify the concrete research questions(s) you would like to address in your project and why these are important for the field.*

Scholars in the fields of literary and cultural studies have written an uncountable number of articles and books on immigrant and ethnic minority writing in contexts ranging from classical immigration countries, such as the US, Canada or Australia, to countries where immigration is a more recent phenomenon, such as Great Britain, France or Germany. By contrast, as the above state of the art has shown, we only have very little knowledge about immigrant writing in Austria. Therefore, a first objective of our project is to increase our knowledge in this particular field: What is the history of immigrant writing in Austria? Who were and are the most important authors? When and how did they emerge? How can we interpret their writings?

Our analysis of this field will be inspired by the international state of the art on immigrant and ethnic minority writing that we have analysed in several articles (Sievers 2011a, b, c). In particular, we subscribe to the argument that immigrant writing is not a separate phenomenon, but part and parcel of the developments in the literary fields of the countries where these authors are residing. Like Leslie Adelson, we see this literature as deeply involved in shaping the discourses on the pasts and futures of the countries where they have emerged (Adelson 2005: 29). Or, in Tom Cheesman's terms, "Turkish German literature both issues from and accelerates what Ulrich Beck terms the 'cosmopolitanization' of German society and culture, or its 'globalization from within', which involves what Zafer Senocak calls the 'extension of the concept of Germanness'." (Cheesman 2007: 12). Our second objective will be to test whether this hypothesis also holds true for contemporary immigrant writers in Austria. How far do these authors change our understanding of what it means to be Austrian in their texts? What literary means do they use for this purpose? How far do these literary discourses coincide with what has been observed in other contexts? What are the differences? And how can we explain these by the specific Austrian context?

However, our project will also move beyond this state of the art. We pose that the transnationalisation of what it means to be Austrian, as it can be observed in texts written by immigrant authors, is only one dimension of a larger change: the general transnationalisation of the Austrian literary field that does not only affect the works of the authors but also the publishing and reception structures. This does not imply that we believe immigration to necessarily have this effect on literary fields. As our project will show, there are many examples in Austrian literary history of authors who have come to Austria as immigrants and have become famous here, without the literary field having changed as a result of this process. This may be explained by the fact that literary fields will only change markedly if factors outside these fields support such a change, as Bourdieu has pointed out in his study of the French literary field. Our hypothesis is that for the transnationalisation of the Austrian literary field currently underway growing immigration has been an important factor. However, while immigration began to grow significantly in the late 1960s, immigrant writing has only become more important in the 1990s. Other external factors that have initiated this modification in the literary field were the changes in the Austrian political landscape that turned immigration into a political issue (Sievers 2008), the decrease of state funding for Austrian publishers and the general internationalisation processes in Austria that have also had a significant impact on the Austrian publishing scene:

several Austrian publishers were bought by bigger German publishing companies (Landerl 2005: 17-66; Zeyringer 2008: 428-429). One of these, Deuticke, now an imprint of Hanser, has become the most important publishing house for Austrian immigrant writing over the last decade. In fact, it has made these writers as famous as they are now, not only in Austria but also in Germany.

Our third and both most innovative but also most challenging objective will therefore be to assess whether these two processes of transnationalisation are linked and if so how. Have these changes in Austrian publishing opened up new possibilities for contemporary immigrant authors, who have often pointed to the difficulty of getting published?<sup>3</sup> Has it been easier for them to utter their critical stance of what it means to be Austrian in these transnational publishing structures? Have they become more accepted as artists in an environment where they are not only received in Austria but also in Germany? And is this process specific to our times or can we observe similar processes at earlier points in Austrian history? Or did earlier immigrant authors, such as Elias Canetti, Milo Dor or György Sebestyén, enter publishing by adapting to the expectations of Austrian publishers (as has been shown by Ranasinha 2007 for early Asian authors in Britain)?

A specifically innovative aspect of our project will be that it will try to link the publishing possibilities existing at a particular moment in time with the contents of the works written by the immigrant authors that manage to get published. This will allow us to highlight how the changes we currently observe are brought about both by the authors and by the modifications in the publishing and reception structures in Austria.

### **2.3 Methodological approaches** (1-2 pages)

*Elaborate the methodology you want to use in order to answer your research questions and to reach your objectives. Describe your basic working principles and concepts and why the chosen approach/specific mix of approaches is the most suitable and promising way to reach your objectives.*

Our project will use a comparative historical approach in order to describe the specificity of the current situation in the Austrian literary field and combine sociological methods with literary analysis for each of the case studies to be analysed. While the comparative approach and the literary analysis build on existing models, we intend to develop a new sociological methodology for our project. Hence, the following explanations of our methodological approaches will focus on our sociological approach.

While we will focus on the current transnationalisation of the literary field and contemporary immigrant writers, our study will also include three earlier authors who came to Vienna in the course of the 20th century and became well-known here: Elias Canetti, Milo Dor and György Sebestyén. We do not assume that there is a historical evolution of immigrant writing in Austria in the 20<sup>th</sup> century in the sense that contemporary immigrant authors build on what has been achieved by these earlier writers. We hypothesize that each of these authors will have met with different circumstances in the literary field of their receiving country at the time of their arrival and each of them will have used different strategies in order to enter these fields. Moreover, these three historical cases will vastly differ from the positionings of current immigrant authors in Austria (for a first analysis of such differences see Sievers 2009a). It is exactly this difference

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<sup>3</sup>The fact that immigrant authors have often found it difficult to enter publishing has also been described in detail by Jules-Rosette (1998) for Black authors in 1930s and 1940s France. Unlike contemporary immigrant authors in Austria, these authors have tried to overcome this problem by founding their own publishing houses.

that we are interested in: our case studies of earlier immigrant authors will serve as a contrastive foil for our study of the contemporary situation. It will help us to understand the specific circumstances and actions that have brought about the transnationalisation of the literary field that is currently underway.

In order to understand both historical and contemporary positionings of immigrant authors in Austria, we will combine a sociological analysis of the literary field at each particular point in time with the literary analysis of the individual works of each single author. This approach departs from Pierre Bourdieu's theory on the literary field (Bourdieu 2001). Bourdieu assumes that it is not only ingenuity that leads to the canonisation of certain writers and to the marginalisation of others. He believes that these selection processes are the result of a fight for domination of different literary movements within particular literary fields at certain points in time. The various actors within the field (including publishers, critics, academics and the writers themselves) determine what gets published and praised and what is ignored or marginalised. Departing from these insights, we will develop a multidimensional model that will enable us to explain both the various positionings of immigrant writers in the Austrian literary field in the course of the 20th century and, more specifically, the transnationalisation of the Austrian literary field currently underway (see workpackage 1 for more details). Based on this model, we will analyse the structures in the Austrian literary field at four different points in time in the course of the 20th century. This will include research on literary movements, publishers, literary magazines, cultural institutions and academic discourses at each relevant point in time. Regarding the contemporary situation, we will supplement the information available from earlier research with interviews with relevant actors in the field. The aim of these in-depth analyses will be to understand the field of possibilities, as Bourdieu calls it, open to authors at each particular point in time.

Based on these analyses of the existing structures in the literary fields, we will proceed to identify how the individual immigrant authors position(ed) themselves within the field of possibilities open to them and how they were/are positioned by other actors in the field. For this purpose, we will consult the authors' correspondence with publishers, literary institutions and colleagues with regard to the three historical cases and conduct interviews with contemporary immigrant authors. In addition, we will analyse the literary works themselves. These analyses do not aim at discussing how these texts mirror immigrant realities in Austria (as many of the early German analyses of guestworker literature did, see for example Ackermann 1984) but at understanding the positionings of the immigrant authors in the Austrian literary field as they become apparent through their texts. Building on existing analytical models (see e.g. Adelson 2005, Cheesman 2007, Minnaard 2008), we hypothesize that contemporary immigrant literature does not only deconstruct dominant understandings of 'Austrianness', but also imagines alternative models of belonging. We regard literature as an ideal mode to construct such alternative models and are in our textual analysis particularly interested in the literary strategies (narrative, stylistic, thematic etc.) developed and used by these authors for this purpose.

In sum, our methodology will allow us a) to consider the circumstances under which transnational discourses in literature have become successful, b) to analyse the specific literary strategies used in the texts to transnationalise our understanding of Austrianness and national belonging and c) to show that this is unique in historical comparison.

## 2.4 Project Design / Work plan *(about five pages)*

*Describe the overall project design and outline a tentative schedule illustrating the concrete working steps. Link them with chosen methods, goals, and expected results and explain if and when your project faces stages where the work plan may require adjustments as a result of previous steps. Divide the work programme into separate packages and steps in a way that you consider appropriate for a concise demonstration*

### **Workpackage 1: Theoretical and methodological reflections**

Duration: Months 1-6

Researchers involved: Martina Kamm, Wiebke Sievers, Sandra Vlasta

In his study on *The Rules of Art*, Pierre Bourdieu analyses the structures of the literary field in France. He argues that these structures evolved in the second half of the 19th century when general education led to an increase in the number of readers and writers. At this time, the literary field split into those authors writing easily accessible prose for quick economic success and those working towards long-term consecration. Bourdieu is particularly interested in the latter group because they constitute what he would describe as a field. These writers are involved in a constant fight for domination between literary movements opposing each other. In that sense, the literary field is similar to the economic or the political field: all actors involved in these fields ultimately aim for a high position in the field of power. However, the way they gain the capital necessary to reach this high position differs markedly between these fields. In the literary field, gaining economic capital has come to be regarded as precluding consecration. Writers aspiring to be accepted as artists will have to slowly gather what Bourdieu calls symbolic capital by being issued by established publishers, being praised by critics in relevant feuillets, being awarded prizes and being taught and discussed at universities and schools. In the course of this process, all actors involved try to improve their own positions in the field. At each particular point in time, a certain constellation of writers, publishers, critics and academics will dominate the field and determine what is considered to be art. But in the course of time, their positions will be challenged by new groups trying to establish a counter-position within the field (Bourdieu 2001).

Of course, these observations do not necessarily apply to the Austrian literary field. But Bourdieu's study of the French literary field has inspired several analyses of the Austrian literary field (Landerl 2005, Beilein 2008) which will be helpful for understanding the various possibilities open to writers who have immigrated to Austria in the course of the 20th century. However, neither Bourdieu himself nor the above publications on Austria have discussed the particular position of immigrant writers. In fact, these works are still strongly governed by national paradigms (with some exceptions, such as Landerl taking into account the strong links between the Austrian and the German literary fields). Pascale Casanova (2008) has tried to go beyond the national dimension by looking at the fight for domination in the international literary arena with a particular focus on power differentials between the European centre (in particular Paris) and the periphery. From this perspective, migration to the centre can be regarded as an individual way of gaining symbolic capital in the international literary arena. A question she has not addressed is how this process may change the literary fields of the respective host countries of these authors.

This workpackage will therefore serve to develop a multi-dimensional model that will enable us to explain both the various positionings of immigrant writers in the Austrian literary fields in the

course of the 20th century and, more specifically, the transnationalisation of the Austrian literary field currently underway. Such a model will have to take into account various dimensions:

- 1) personal dimensions, i.e. the origin, process of immigration, class, gender, language etc. of the respective immigrant author;
- 2) national dimensions, i.e. the specific structure of the Austrian literary field at a particular point in time, including literary movements, publishers, critics, academics etc.;
- 3) international dimensions:
  - a) the position of Austrian national literature in the international arena;
  - b) the position of the literatures of the immigrant authors' countries of origin;
  - c) the position of immigrant literature in the international arena at particular points in time;
- 4) external factors, such as general internationalisation processes, including growing immigration, that may have an impact on the literary field.

Not all of these dimensions will be relevant for each of the case studies to be discussed in the following two workpackages. But the model will allow us to reflect all possible dimensions that may influence the positioning of a particular immigrant author at a specific point in time and to develop a methodological approach based on these reflections. At the same time, it will enable us to explain why the Austrian literary field is being transnationalised at this particular point in time rather than at earlier stages in history.

## **Workpackage 2: Historical positionings of immigrant authors**

Duration: Months 7-14

Researchers involved: Murray Hall, Wiebke Sievers, Sandra Vlasta

This workpackage will focus on three authors who came to Vienna in the course of the 20th century and became well-known writers here: Elias Canetti, Milo Dor and György Sebestyén. Each of these authors represents a specific migration movement to Vienna: Canetti came at the beginning of the 20th century when Vienna was the cultural capital of Eastern Europe; Dor arrived in the course of the Second World War; Sebestyén left Hungary after the uprising in 1956. Each of them will have met with different circumstances in the literary field of their receiving country at the time of their arrival and they will have used different strategies in order to enter these fields. However, our hypothesis is that their situations were similar in one respect: unlike today, there were no specific structures for immigrant writers in the Austrian literary field. Nevertheless, Canetti, Dor and Sebestyén managed to access the field. The aim of this workpackage is to describe their different positionings in the light of the structures of the literary field at the time of their arrival with a view to highlighting the differences between their specific situations and the conditions in the literary field today.

The multi-dimensional model developed in WP1 will be the basis for our analysis of the specific structures of the literary fields and the positionings of the authors within these fields at these three stages in Austrian literary history. In order to identify the particular dimensions of the model relevant for their particular positioning in the field, we will:

- 1) gather biographical data on each of the three authors (personal dimensions);

2) do research on literary movements, publishers, literary magazines and cultural institutions at the relevant time (national and international dimensions as well as external factors that may have brought about changes);

3) consult the authors' correspondence with publishers, literary institutions, critics, translators, journalists, colleagues etc. (personal, national and international dimensions);

4) analyse their literary works (personal, national and international dimensions).

Our textual analyses under point 3 and 4 will serve to answer the following questions:

- How did each of these authors enter the literary fields?
- How did they position themselves in the fields and how were they positioned by others?
- Did they join existing literary movements and if so which?
- Did they try to establish their own literary traditions?
- How did these circumstances influence their works?
- How were they received?
- And last but not least, did the fact that they immigrated to Austria influence their positioning? And if so, how?

The results of this workpackage will show that the fact that an author is an immigrant does not necessarily influence his or her positioning in the literary field of the host country, let alone change this literary field. The three historical case studies will serve as a contrastive foil for our research on the current situation in WP3 and will help us to better grasp the transnationalisation currently taking place in the Austrian literary field.

### **Workpackage 3: Contemporary positionings of immigrant authors or the transnationalisation of the Austrian literary field**

Duration: Months 15-26

Researchers involved: Murray Hall, Martina Kamm, Wiebke Sievers, Christa Stippinger, Sandra Vlasta

This workpackage aims to analyse the conditions in the literary field for contemporary writers who have immigrated to Austria. Our hypothesis is that the Austrian literary field is currently being transnationalised and that the specific positioning of immigrant authors within the field is part and parcel of this process. Many of the authors we intend to discuss in more detail entered the Austrian literary field through a structure specifically created for immigrant writers in the 1990s when immigration became a political issue in Austria: the literary prize "schreiben zwischen den kulturen". This particular approach was very much in line with the contemporary structures in the Austrian literary field strongly dependent on state funding (Landerl 2005). However, the success of immigrant writers, the fact that this writing gained wider recognition and also became a point of reference for writers who originally entered the field through other channels (such as Radek Knapp, Doron Rabinovici and Vladimir Vertlib) is linked to the general transnationalisation in the Austrian literary field, brought about by decreasing state funds since the mid-1990s and the resulting growing importance of commercial success for both authors and publishers (Landerl 2005, Zeyringer 2008: 427ff.). It is under these particular circumstances



that commercial publishers began issuing immigrant authors, probably imitating the commercial success of such writers in the Anglo-American world that has wide international influence through translation (see Sievers 2009b). Subsequently, these writers themselves have further contributed to the transnationalisation of the Austrian literary field, not only through their presence and their works that transnationalise our understanding of what it means to be Austrian but also through introducing new literatures from their countries of origin (see Vlasta 2011). At the same time, these authors have been going through a process of being accepted as artists in the Austrian literary field, in which they first were positioned as immigrants, which has often implied a denigration of their works.

It is this particular process that we intend to analyse in more detail for each single author based on the model developed in WP1. The analysis will include a large number of authors who most probably will have met with very different circumstances, depending on their countries of origin, their times of arrival, their linguistic capabilities, their individual networks etc. Apart from the methods already explained in WP2, this WP will draw on interviews with:

- a) publishers, including edition exil, Deuticke Verlag, Milena Verlag, Droschl Verlag, Piper Verlag, Suhrkamp Verlag, Wieser Verlag;
- b) editors of literary magazines, including Wespennest, Kolik, Zwischenwelt (Mit der Zieharmonika);
- c) relevant cultural institutions, including the Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture, the Cultural Department of the Council of Vienna (MA7), the IG AutorInnen, the Robert-Bosch-Foundation, the Hohenemser Prize for Literature, the Literary Prize Wartholz, the Rauriser Prize for Literature;
- d) authors, including Zdenka Becker, Seher Çakir, Dimitré Dinev, Alma Hadzibeganovic, Grzegorz Kielawski, Anna Kim, Radek Knapp, Viktorija Kocman, Denis Mikan, Julya Rabinowich, Doron Rabinovici, Hamid Sadr, Michael Stavaric, Stanislav Struhar, Sina Tahayori, Vladimir Vertlib, Yildiz Serafettin, Kundeyt Surdum, Sohn Young.

All the partners mentioned above will develop the questionnaires used for these interviews in collaboration, using the multi-dimensional model as a basis. This way, we will make sure that experts from the fields of sociology, migration studies, literary studies, book research as well as an actor in the field will feed their expertise and experience into the questionnaires, which will have to be targeted at the various actors in the field mentioned above.

In addition to the interviews, we will analyse the texts written by the above immigrant authors with a view to assessing whether and if so how (i.e. with which literary means) they re-imagine our understanding of what it means to be Austrian.

#### **Workpackage 4: Publications**

Duration: Months 27-34

Researchers involved: Martina Kamm, Wiebke Sievers, Christa Stippinger, Sandra Vlasta

We expect our project to result in two publications:

- a) a book summarising the academic results of the project including chapters on the theory and methodology (based on WP1), three chapters on the historical case studies (WP2), one chapter

on the contemporary conditions for immigrant writers in Austria plus several contemporary case studies which will be determined in the course of the project (WP3);

b) a book containing (excerpts from) the interviews with authors, publishers, critics etc. (to be published by edition exil).

This workpackage will serve to finalise these two publications.

### **Workpackage 5: Dissemination of results**

Months 1-36

Researchers involved: Martina Kamm, Wiebke Sievers, Christa Stippinger, Sandra Vlasta

This WP will serve to provide information on our project, its progress and results to the academic community and the interested public.

We will use four different methods of disseminating our results:

a) Website: The project team will commission a website that will serve to provide information on the project, its progress and published results.

b) The project team will publish one book summarising the academic results of the project and one collection of author interviews (to be issued by edition exil) (see workpackage 4).

c) Final conference: The conference will serve to disseminate all results to the scientific community and a wider interested public.

d) Conference papers: The academics involved in the project will present papers based on the results of this project at conferences in Europe and the United States.

### **2.5 Relevance and prospective benefits** *(about half a page)*

*Shortly illustrate the scientific, economic and/or societal relevance of your project. What are the most significant benefits that may result from your project if successfully completed? Further, you have to demonstrate that your project is of relevance for Vienna.*

The project "Literature on the Move" will close several gaps in international scholarship. It will be the first study that provides information on the conditions in the Austrian literary field for contemporary immigrant writers and compares their experiences to earlier cases. But it will not only contribute to the discussion of these authors in Austria. Our particular approach that combines sociological methods with literary analysis in order to understand the transnationalisation of the Austrian literary field will also make a major contribution to the international debate on immigrant writing. It will allow us to better understand the paradox between success and marginalisation of immigrant authors observed in several contexts but never analysed in detail. In addition, our project will improve our understanding of the international dimensions of literary fields, in general, and the positioning of immigrant authors in literary fields, in particular.

However, the results of our project will not only be of relevance for literary scholarship. They will also be of societal relevance since they will improve our understanding of diversity in a particular domain: the Austrian literary field. Our project will provide several in depth-analyses of the dynamics of integration in the Austrian literary field at various points of the 20th century. They will highlight that integration is a) an individual process strongly influenced by personal dispositions, national structures and international power differentials and b) a two-way process

in the sense that the integration of newcomers goes hand in hand with the change of national structures, such as the literary field.

Last but not least, the concrete outcomes of our project will be of special relevance for Vienna. Being the capital of Austria as well as its biggest city, Vienna has been the core of the Austrian literary field and focal point for initiatives for a long time. In addition, Vienna has also always been the place attracting the largest share of immigration to Austria. This implies that the focus of our project will be on authors and institutions in Vienna (albeit not exclusively). Moreover, the city council of Vienna has tried to influence the Austrian literary field by co-financing the literary prize “schreiben zwischen den kulturen” that has been a springboard for many of the writers to be discussed in our project. Our results will allow the city to understand the role this initiative has played in the transnationalisation of the Austrian literary field.

## 2.6 Bibliography

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